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FRONTISPIECE

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THE

CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

MR. BERQUIN,

BY LUCAS WILLIAMS, ESQ.

A NEW CORRECTED EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS,

AND

EMBELLISHED WITH FORTY-FOUR COPPER-PLATES.

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THE

CHILDREN's FRIEND.

THE HEN.

HOW happy was Cyprian in ſo worthy and affectionate a father as Mr. Tiſdall. Whenever he had ſhown himſelf for any length of time diſcreet and diligent, he was aſſured that his father would not fail to teſtify his ſatisfaction with ſome recompence or other. Cyprian had a taſte for gardening, and began, about the age of twelve, to cultivate choice flowers. His father ſaw it, and immediately began to ſtudy how he might afford his ſon more pleaſure.

They were both at dinner. Cyprian, ſaid his father, your preceptor has informed me, that you have begun this very day to read

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the Roman Hiſtory, and the Geography of Italy. If, in a week, you can but give me an exact account of every thing you may have learned on theſe two ſubjects, you cannot think what I intend ſhall recompence your application!

Cyprian, one may eaſily ſuppoſe, did not forget ſuch a promiſe. He employed himſelf in ſtudying all the week, to get this recompence; or rather, he received ſuch pleaſure from his ſtudy, that indeed it was he who ſhould have beſtowed a recompence on his papa, if he had been able.

He ſaw the day of trial come, without anxiety; and underwent the examination like an hero. He had learned the hiſtory of all the kings of Rome, and marked out in his map the gradual progreſs of that growing empire.

In a tranſport of delight, his father took him by the hand, embraced and kiſſed him. Come, ſays he, ſince you have ſought to give me ſo much pleaſure, it is but juſt that I ſhould contribute in my turn to yours. Saying this, he led him into an adjoining garden, pointed out a vacant ſpot to him, and told him that it was to be his.

'You

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You may part it in two, continued he; and plant what flowers you like in one, and any vegetables that you think proper in the other. After this, they went into an outhouſe, cloſe behind the gardener's hut, where Cyprian found a ſpade, a watering-pot, a rake, and other implements of gardening, all perfectly adapted to his ſize and ſtrength. On the walls were baſkets hung up, of every ſize, great and ſmall, and on ſhelves about them, ſundry boxes full of roots, and bags of ſeeds; the whole together duly ticketed, with cards on every box and bag, marking the proper time for ſowing each article.

One ſhould be of Cyprian's age to know the exceſs of his joy upon this occaſion. In his mind, the little ſpot of earth which his father had aſſigned him, was as great as monarchs think their kingdoms; and whatever hours of relaxation his preceptor let him take, which he ſpent before in folly, were now taken up in cultivating his domain.

One day, when he came in from doing ſomething about his garden, he forgot to ſhut the gate. A hen was pecking near the

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ſpot, and took it in her head to go a hunting on his grounds. The flower-bed had been ſtrewed but lately with a layer of the richeſt mould, and was conſequently quite full of worms.

The hen, charmed with ſuch delicious fare, began to ſcratch the mould up, and employ her beak as well as talons to unearth the worms; and in particular, ſhe took a mighty inclination to a part, where Cyprian had, the day before, been planting ſome fine pinks.

How great therefore was the exceſs of his rage when coming back to his plantation, he beheld the door a-jar, and this new-faſhioned gardener digging up his beds? Ah! ah! you impudent ſlut! ſaid he; your bones ſhall pay for this. And immediately he ſhut the door, for fear his victim ſhould eſcape, and picking up flint-ſtones, ſand, clods of earth, and whatever he could lay hold, he threw them at the bird, purſuing her all the while as cloſe as he could.

The frightened hen, at one time ran with all her ſpeed, and at another time ſtrove to fly upon the wall, but found that her wings

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wings would not befriend her in reaching ſuch a height. Unhappily, ſhe fell back more than once on Cyprian's flowers, and got her wings and feet entangled with the fineſt hyacinths.

Young Cyprian, beholding her thus embroiled, ſuppoſed that he had her faſt. Two rows of tulips ſeparated them. His anger was ſo vehement, that ſtepping over, as he meant to do, this interval of ſeparation between the hen and him, he trod them down himſelf. The hen, however, at her enemy's approach, redoubled her former efforts, and attempted now a ſecond time to gain the wall. She roſe a great deal higher than before, yet ſtill came ſhort;—but what was matter of regret for Cyprian, bore away with her, from underneath as ſhe roſe, a beautiful roſe-coloured ten-belled hyacinth. On this, he ſeized his rake, and flung it at the bird with all his ſtrength. The rake turned round, and while he fancied it upon the point of hitting the fugitive mark, it came down, and daſhed two panes of glaſs to pieces in a melon frame, as well as broke out two of its own teeth upon the ground.

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The little fury, made much more furious by theſe damages, had run for his ſpade, and now the combat would perhaps have had fatal conſequences for his feathered adverſary, who fatigued and giddy had crept in between a roſe-buſh and the wall, if Mr. Tiſdall, at firſt attracted to his window by the noiſe, had not made haſte to her aſſiſtance.

The moment Cyprian ſaw his father, he ſtood ſtock ſtill in evident confuſion; however he made ſhift to find his tongue at laſt, and cried out, See, papa, what ravage this vile creature has committed in my garden!

Had you ſhut the door, replied his father with an affected indifference, this ravage would not have been made. I ſaw your whole behaviour. Are you not aſhamed of having put forth all your ſtrength againſt a harmleſs hen? She has no *reaſon* to conduct herſelf, and though ſhe had rooted up your pinks, it was not with a wiſh to do you any damage, but to get her ordinary food. Now, Cyprian, ſhould you have put yourſelf thus into a paſſion, if ſhe had ſcratched up nothing but as many nettle-roots?

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roots? And how can ſhe diſtinguiſh between pinks and nettles? It is yourſelf alone that are to blame for all this havock. With precaution you would certainly have driven her out ſo that ſhe might do no further miſchief; and in that caſe, neither your rake, nor my melon frame, would have gone to ruin, nor would your loſs have exceeded that of a few flowers. Therefore you alone are puniſhable, ſo that were I to cut a branch off from this hazle-tree, and with it make you ſuffer juſt what you deſigned the hen ſhould ſuffer—which of us would act with the greateſt juſtice? I ſhall not, however, go to this extremity, purpoſely to ſhew you that we may all ſuppreſs our reſentment, if we think proper. Notwithſtanding, for the damage done to my melon-frame, I ſhall deduct as much as will repair it, from the arrears of your allowance in my hands; for I am not to ſuffer through your raſhneſs.

Cyprian, upon this, withdrew much abaſhed, and all day durſt ſcarcely lift his eyes up, while before his father.

On the morrow, Mr. Tiſdall propoſed a walk, and aſked if he deſired to join him.

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Cyprian followed, but oppreſſed with ſadneſs which he fought in vain to hide. His father ſaw it, and affecting a degree of wonder, wiſhed to know why he appeared ſo grievouſly dejected.

Cyprian. Have I not the greateſt cauſe to be dejected? For this whole month paſt, I have denied myſelf many pleaſures, merely to buy ſomething for my ſiſter. I had ſaved ten ſhillings, with which I thought to purchaſe her a pretty hat; but muſt give the half of it perhaps to have your melon frame repaired.

Mr. Tiſdall. I dare ſay, you would have been delighted to oblige your ſiſter, but my melon frame, however, muſt be paid for firſt. This leſſon will teach you in future not to yield yourſelf up to the miſchiefs of reſentment, which in general aggravates the firſt misfortune happening to us.

Cyprian. Oh! you may depend upon it, ſir, I will never leave the garden-door open again, or take revenge upon a hen for what would be my own omiſſion.

Mr. Tiſdall. But, pray tell me, do you fancy

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fancy that, in this vaſt univerſe, hens only have it in their power to do you damage?

Cyprian. O! no, no; for I can tell you, not above a week ago I left my map upon the table while I went a walking, and my little ſiſter coming into the room, with a pen and ink ſo blotted it all over, that no one could diſtinguiſh Europe from America.

Mr. Tiſdall. Then it is prudent to ſecure yourſelf againſt the miſchiefs that you may ſuffer from your fellow-creatures.

Cyprian. It is ſo, papa.

Mr. Tiſdall. Without deſiring in the leaſt to give you a diſtaſte of life, I can aſſure you that you will have to ſuffer many diſagreeable affairs, and thoſe a deal more prejudicial to you, than the miſchiefs cauſed by the hen. Mankind always ſeek their intereſt, and their pleaſures, juſt as hens ſeek worms; and they will do ſo at the hazard of your intereſts, as hens will at the hazard of your flowers.

Cyprian. I ſee it plainly, ſir, by Bella's behaviour; ſince the little pleaſure that ſhe received from ſcribbling on a bit of paper, has occaſioned me the loſs of an extremely uſeful map.

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Mr. Tifdall. But could you not have avoided this loſs by putting up your map before you left the apartment?

Cyprian. Certainly.

Mr. Tifdall. Then think for the future to conduct yourſelf ſo, that nobody may have power to do you any real miſchief; but if after all, in ſpite of your precaution, you ſhould be ſo unlucky as to receive an injury, conſider how you may endure it, ſo as not to render the firſt wrong ſtill more prejudicial.

Cyprian. Ay, papa; but how muſt I endure it?

Mr. Tifdall. With indifference, if it be a ſlight injury, but, on the other hand, if a great one, with courage. Now that we are by ourſelves, I dare propoſe to you as an example the conduct that I purſue towards Mr. Hotham.

Cyprian. Pray don't ſpeak of him, papa. For theſe two years paſt, he has taken no notice of you whenever you have met each other, and there cannot be a falſity that he will not ſay to injure you in the opinion of the world.

Mr.

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Mr. Tiſdall. And do you know what urges him to ſuch behaviour?

Cyprian. That I never yet durſt aſk you.

Mr. Tiſdall. Nothing but the preference which I obtained reſpecting an employment that my father had moſt worthily filled up for five and thirty years, and to which he had affectionately formed me by the moſt diligent inſtruction. Mr. Hotham had no title to the poſt, except his ignorance and ſelf-ſufficiency. My right ſucceeded, notwithſtanding all his intereſt, and therefore am I honoured with his calumny and hatred.

Cyprian. Ah! papa, were I as big as you, I'd teach him better manners.

Mr. Tiſdall. Quite the contrary; I let him go on railing at me juſt as he thinks fit. The conduct which you ſhould have purſued, when you were injured by the hen, I faithfully purſue towards him. The pinks that ſhe ſcratched up by the roots, in ſeeking for worms, may repreſent the reputable character that I bear, and which in order to gratify the worm of Envy that gnaws him, he labours to undo. Were I to ſeek the means of puniſhing him, I

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ſhould trample under foot that deference and reſpect which I owe to myſelf, as you trod under foot your tulips. The melon-frame and rake which you damaged, are that wealth and peace of mind that I ſhould deſtroy by hurrying on to vengeance. Taught in future by the loſſes that you have ſuffered, you will ſhut the garden-door, in order to keep the hen out. Taught too by the wicked diſpoſition of my enemy, I lay, by means of proper conduct on my part, an inſuperable barrier between us. Thus inacceſſible to his vindictive attempts, I enjoy the comforts of my moderation, while he ſpends himſelf in thoſe attempts, and will in time experience the compunction of his evil conſcience. Could his inſults vex me, I ſhould make myſelf the victim that he would ſacrifice, and be reproached for imbecility, by every worthy character of my acquaintance; while on the other hand the inſenſibility that I manifeſt for his injurious treatment, yields him to his own contempt, and, in the minds of good men, keeps up the reputation that I have gained among them.

Cyprian. Ah! papa, what trouble may I not

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not ſhun hereafter, by remembering every thing that you have taught me!

These laſt words were hardly uttered, when they found themſelves at home, without imagining that they had been ſo near it. Their diſcourſe, for the remainder of the day, was a continuation of the paſt; and bed-time being come, they ſeparated quite content with one another. Cyprian ſunk to ſlumber, with a boſom full of gratitude for the inſtruction which he had juſt received, and Mr. Tiſdall poſſeſſing all the ſatisfaction that a good father cannot but experience, who is ſenſible that he has done ſomething to promote his offspring's happineſs.

THE ROSE-BUSH.

WHO will give me ſome nice tree or other for my garden? ſaid little Frederic one day to his brothers Auguſtus and Jaſper, and his ſiſter Jemima.

Their papa had given them each a little bit

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bit of ground to ſow or plant, as they thought proper.)

Oh not I, ſaid Auguſtus; not I, ſaid Jaſper.

Well then, I will, anſwered Jemima. Let me know what ſort of tree you would like?

A roſe-buſh, cried Frederic. Do but look at mine: it is the only one now left me; and the leaves, as you may ſee, are turned quite yellow.

Come then, ſaid the lively Jemima, come and chuſe one for yourſelf. On which ſhe led him to a little ſpot of ground that ſhe cultivated; and the moment they had entered, pointing with her finger to a charming roſe-buſh, told him he had nothing to do, but to take it up immediately.

Frederic. How, ſiſter! you have only two, and wiſh beſides to give me up the fineſt! No, no; here is the leaſt, and juſt ſuch as I want.

Jemima. You do not know how much pleaſure I ſhall feel, if you will but take the other, Frederic. This may ſcarce produce you any flowers next ſummer; but the other will, I am certain: and you know, I ſhall

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ſhall be pleaſed as much with looking at it elſewhere, when full blown, as if it had continued in my garden.

Frederic overjoyed, approached the roſe-buſh, took it up; and Jemima, much more pleaſed, aſſiſted in the tranſplantation.

It appears that the gardener noticed this ſurpriſing piece of kindneſs in the little girl. Away he ran, ſelected from a number of young Windſor pear-trees, one which he thought the fineſt, and immediately conveyed it into Jemima's garden, planting it exactly in the ſpot with the roſe-buſh had poſſeſſed before.

Thoſe who have a churliſh nature hardly ever are aſſiduous: therefore when the ſummer months were come, Jaſper and his brother having never attended their roſe-plants, they promiſed no great quantity of flowers; and to increaſe their diſappointment, the chief part of thoſe which they thought were coming, periſhed in the bud; while on the contrary Frederic's roſe-buſh, in conſequence of great attention paid it by himſelf and Jemima, bore the fineſt cent-foil roſes that the whole county could boaſt; and as long as it remained in flower, the happy

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happy Frederic always had a roſe to ſtick in ſweet Jemima's boſom, and another for himſelf to ſmell.

Likewiſe did the Windſor pear-tree thrive ſurpriſingly: it ſcattered a delicious perfume over all the garden, and ſoon grew ſo thick and lofty as to yield a tolerable ſhade. Jemima uſed to come and take her ſeat beneath it, when the ſun was hotteſt; as her father alſo did, when he would tell her charming ſtories, ſome of which would make her all at once burſt out a laughing till her ſides even ached again; and others produced ſuch agreeable melancholy in her, that ſoon after ſhe would ſmile with pleaſure at the recollection of her ſorrow.

Here is one that he told her for her generoſity towards Frederic; by which ſtory ſhe was thoroughly convinced that ſuch as we oblige can recompence our generoſity; which circumſtance, he ſaid, without adverting to the ſatisfaction of our hearts, muſt be a ſtrong incentive to kind actions.

THE

THE NOSEGAYS.

LITTLE Gerald went out one morning with his neighbour Eugene, to divert themſelves by gathering flowers. Their eagerneſs would not allow them to diſpatch their breakfaſt in the houſe: they took it with them in their hands.

They met a beggar-woman in the way, who had a child apparently expiring, as it were, with hunger.

My dear little maſter, ſaid the woman, looking upon Gerald, who happened to be firſt, for heaven's ſake give my child a morſel of your bread. He has not had a bit of any thing to eat ſince yeſterday.

It may be ſo, ſaid Gerald; but I am very hungry likewiſe, and went forward, munching all the way.

Now what was Eugene's conduct? He was no leſs hungry, we muſt think, than his companion; but beholding how the poor child cried, he gave up his bread and butter; and received a hundred bleſſings which God heard in heaven.

But

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But this is not the whole. The little boy, revived by what the charitable Eugene had beſtowed upon him, inſtantly began to run before his benefactor, brought him to a meadow, where he knew there was a multitude of flowers, and helped him to make up ſo magnificent a noſegay, that the pleaſant ſmell proceeding from it made him quite forget his trouble.

Eugene, after this, went home and ſhewed it with a deal of pleaſure; for not only was the ſweetneſs of it very grateful, but its ſize was ſuch that he might eaſily have hid his face behind it.

Next day likewiſe they went out, and then another little boy, whoſe name was Watty, met them.

After having taken half a dozen turns with Gerald and Eugene in the meadow, Watty, looking down, perceived his buckle loſt, and begged them both to aſſiſt him in ſearching for it. Oh, ſays Gerald, I cannot ſpare time enough for that at preſent, and went on; but Eugene ſtopped immediately, that he might be of ſervice to his little friend.

He walked a long while up and down, both

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both ſtooping all the way, and patting with his hand, to try if he could feel it in the graſs: and had at laſt the happineſs to find it.

Watty too was happy; and they ſet about the buſineſs which had brought them thither.

Watty, out of gratitude, beſtowed the fineſt flowers of thoſe which he had gathered, upon Eugene; but paid no regard to Gerald, who had refuſed to help him; ſo that Eugene had that day alſo, a finer noſegay than Gerald, aud came back as ſatisfied as the other was diſcontented.

Gerald ſuppoſed the third day he might prove more lucky: He preceded Eugene, and defied him to collect a finer noſegay than he ſhould. But hardly were they come into the meadow, when behold the little boy who had been fed by Eugene, came to meet him with a baſket full of flowers, which, it ſeems, he had gathered that morning.

Gerald would have begun to gather for himſelf; but how was he to find the flowers? The little boy had got up earlier by far than he; and therefore he had ſtill leſs

flowers

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flowers that day than either of the two preceding.

They were going home, but met little Watty.

My dear friend, said he to Eugene, I have not forgot the service that you did me yesterday, and have taken such a liking to you, that I could wish to be at all times in your company. Papa too, though he never saw you, has the same ideas in your favour, and has bid me come and fetch you to his house this morning: He designs to tell us merry stories, and afterwards will play with us.

I will take you to a garden here hard by us, where we are allowed to walk, and there you will find four or five companions of my age to welcome you; when we are all together we will play at whatever game you like.

Eugene instantly laid hold of Watty's hand, and flew like lightning with him towards the garden. As for Gerald, poor fellow! he went home quite melancholy. Watty had not once invited him.

He learned by these three days adventures,

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tures, but particularly by the laſt, how much one gains by kindneſs and aſſiſtance granted to others. He reformed his churliſh temper; and would certainly, in time, have ſhewn himſelf as courteous to the full as Eugene, if this laſt, by having exerciſed a friendly diſpoſition from his cradle, had not conferred his favours with a greater grace.

THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

A Silly ſervant-maid had poſſeſſed the imagination of her maſter's children with a hundred fooliſh tales of ſpirits, and particularly of a black-faced goblin, as ſhe called it.

Antonia, one of theſe poor children, for the firſt time in her life, beheld a chimney-ſweeper knocking at her father's door. She made a lamentable outcry, and betook herſelf for refuge to the firſt apartment that ſhe found open, which apartment was the kitchen.

Hardly had ſhe hid herſelf behind a table,

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ble, when the black-faced man came in, as if, in her imagination, he had meant to follow her.

This frightened her a ſecond time; and up ſhe ran into a pantry, higher than the kitchen floor by half a dozen ſteps, and not a great way from the fire-place: where ſhe thought ſhe ſhould be ſafe from danger, in a corner.

She had hardly come, however, to herſelf, when ſuddenly ſhe heard the frightful fellow ſinging in the chimney; and, with bruſh and ſcraper, making all the while a rattling noiſe againſt the bricks about him.

Being ſeized with terror, ſhe jumped up, and leaping through a window, which was rather low, into the garden, ran quite breathleſs towards an arbour at the bottom of it, where ſhe fell half dead, and almoſt void of motion, cloſe beſide a tree.

Though ſhe had changed her ſituation by ſo great a diſtance, yet hardly did ſhe venture to look about her; when by chance ſhe ſaw the black-faced man appear again, and wave his bruſh about him, at the chimney-top.

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On this, Antonia almoſt ſplit her throat with crying out, Help! help!

Her father heard the cry, and running towards the arbour, aſked what ailed her, that ſhe cried out ſo! Antonia had not ſtrength ſufficient to articulate a ſingle word, and therefore, keeping ſilence, pointed to the place where Grim was then ſitting aſtride, and flouriſhing his bruſh.

Her father ſmiled; and to convince her what ſmall cauſe ſhe had for terror, waited till the chimney-ſweeper was come down. He then bade him be called, and cleaned a little in Antonia's preſence; after which, without explaining matters any further, he ſent up into the houſe to fetch his barber, who, it happened, was then waiting for him, and who conſequently had his face all over white with powder.

She was heartily aſhamed of having feared ſo much, without occaſion; and her father took this opportunity of giving her to underſtand, that there were whole nations, in a certain quarter of the globe, all over black by nature, but not therefore to be dreaded by white children; ſince theſe laſt were, in another country, generally nurſed by

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by women purchaſed of thoſe nations, without loſing any of their whiteneſs.

Ever afterwards, Antonia was the firſt to laugh at ſilly ſtories, told by ſilly people, of hobgoblins and the like, to fright her.

THE CHERRIES.

JOHANNA and Felix one day got permiſſion, from their dear mama, to take a turn or two about the garden, by themſelves: they had deſerved this confidence placed in them, by their paſt diſcretion.

They amuſed themſelves, by playing for a time together, with that decent gaiety by which it is eaſy to diſtinguiſh young children who have been well brought up.

Againſt the garden wall grew many fruit-trees, and among them a young cherry-tree, which had no earlier than the year before been grafted, and was now in fruit. Its fruit indeed was very little; but on that account, perhaps, much the finer.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Dutton, their mother, did not want to gather them, though ripe. She kept them for her husband's eating, who that very day was to return from York where business had a long time kept him.

As the children were accustomed to obedience, and forbidden once for all to gather any kind of fruit, or pick up even such as they might find upon the ground, to eat it, without asking leave, she thought it useless to say any thing about this cherry-tree.

When Johanna and Felix were fatigued with running up and down the terrace, Come, said Felix, let us do something else now; upon which they joined their hands, and walked sedately towards the bottom of the garden, casting every now and then a look of appetite upon the fruit with which the espaliers were loaded.

They were soon come up to this late grafted tree. A little blast of wind had shaken the finest cherries from it, and they lay upon the ground close by. Young Felix was the first to see them. He advanced his foot, stooped down, and picked them up, eat some, and gave Johanna some, who eat them likewise.

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They had not yet flung the ſtones away, when as it chanced, Johanna recollected her mama's command to eat no fruit but what ſhe might think fit to give her.

Ah! ſaid ſhe to Felix, we have diſobeyed mama by eating any of theſe cherries, and ſhall make her angry with us, when ſhe comes to know it. What had we beſt do?

Felix. Why need mama know any thing about it? We may hold our tongues.

Johanna. No, no; ſhe needs muſt know it, brother. She frequently forgives us the greateſt faults that we can commit, when we confeſs them of ourſelves.

Felix. Yes, yes; but in this inſtance we have diſobeyed her, and ſhe never yet forgave us diſobedience.

Johanna. When ſhe puniſhes our faults, I need not tell you, brother, it is becauſe ſhe loves us; and in conſequence of being puniſhed, we are not ſo very likely to forget, as otherwiſe we ſhould, what we may do, and what we may not.

Felix. True, but ſhe is always ſorry when ſhe puniſhes our faults, and being ſorry, ſhe

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ſhe is unhappy, ſo I ſhould not like to ſee mama unhappy, which would be the caſe did ſhe but know what we have done.

Johanna. Neither ſhould I wiſh to ſee my mama unhappy; but would ſhe not be much more ſo, upon diſcovering that we had wiſhed to hide our faults? Should we be bold enough to look her in the face while we were ſecretly reproached by our own hearts? or rather, ſhould we not be quite aſhamed to hear her call us her dear children, knowing as we muſt, how little we deſerve it?

Felix. Ah, my deareſt ſiſter! you have quite convinced me; and indeed we ſhould, in that caſe, be two little monſters: therefore let us go to her, and acknowledge what we have done.

They kiſſed each other, and went hand in hand to their mama's apartment.

Dear mama, began Johanna, we have diſobeyed you, and not remembered what you forbade us. Puniſh me and Felix as we merit, but pray do not be angry with us; we ſhould both be quite uneaſy were our fault to make you ſorry or unhappy.

She related, in the next place, what her

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brother and herſelf had done, without endeavouring to excuſe the action.

Mrs. Dutton was ſo affected with the openneſs of Felix and Johanna, that a tear of tenderneſs and love eſcaped her. She could not reſolve on puniſhing their fault, but generouſly overlooked it. She well knew that children of a happy diſpoſition are more powerfully wrought on by the recollection of a mother's kindneſs, than by that of her ſeverity.

HOT COCKLES.

The Elder and Younger.

The Younger. BRother, all our friends have left us, and yet ſtill I am in a playing humour. What game ſhall we chuſe?

The Elder. There are only two of us, and I am afraid, we ſhould not be much diverted.

The Younger. Let us play at ſomething, however.

The

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The Elder. But at what?

The Younger. At blindman's buff, for inſtance.

The Elder. That is a game that would never end. It would not be as if there were a dozen, of which number ſome are generally off their guard; but where there are only two, I ſhould not find it difficult to ſhun you, or you me: and then when we had caught each other, we ſhould know for certain who it was.

The Younger. That is true, indeed. Well then, what think you of *Hot Cockles?*

The Elder. That would be the ſame, you know. We could not poſſibly gueſs wrong.

The Younger. Perhaps we might. However, let us try.

The Elder. With all my heart, if it will pleaſe you. Look ye, if you like it, I will be the *hot cockles* firſt.

The Younger. Do, brother. Put your right hand on the bottom of this chair: now ſtoop down and lay your face quite cloſe upon it that you may not ſee. That is well: and now, your left hand on your back. Well, maſter! but I hope your eyes are ſhut?

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The Elder. Yes, yes : do not be afraid.

The Younger. Well, maſter, what have you to ſell ?

The Elder. Hot cockles ! hot !

The Younger, (ſlapping him.) Who ſtruck ?

The Elder, (getting up.) Why who, you little gooſe ! but you ?

The Younger. Yes, yes ; but with which hand ?

The eldeſt did not dream of ſuch a queſtion : he was taken by ſurpriſe, and ſaid *the right,* at hazard.—It was with the left however that he had been ſtruck ; and thus the youngeſt outwitted him.

THE BREAKFAST.

COME, ſaid Mr. Glaſſington to Percival his ſon, one beauteous ſummer morning, here is a baſket with ſome cake and currants in it. Let us go and breakfaſt by the river's ſide.

With all my heart, papa, ſaid Percival, and jumped about for joy. He took the baſket

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basket in one hand, and with the other in his father's, hastened towards the river. Having reached it, they walked on a little way to chuse a proper place; when Mr. Glassington arriving at a very pleasant spot, cried out, Let us stop here, Percival; for this methinks will yield us a delightful prospect, while we sit and eat.

Percival. But how are we to eat without a table?

Mr. Glassington. Fortunately, here is the trunk of an old tree, which would serve by way of table very well, if we had need of one; but you may eat your currants as they lie together in the basket.

Percival. So I can: but how shall we supply the want of chairs?

Mr. Glassington. And do you reckon this soft grass then nothing? See how thick it is set with flowers. We will take our seat upon it: or perhaps you would rather chuse the carpet?

Percival. Chuse the carpet! Why you know, papa, the carpet is fast nailed down upon the parlour floor.

Mr. Glassington. It is true, there is a carpet there; but there is one here also,

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Percival. I do not ſee it, if there is.

Mr. Glaſſington. Why, what is the graſs then, but a carpet for the fields? And what a charming one too! It is of a freſher colour, and much more downy than any one that we have. Then how ſpacious! it covers every hill, and all the level plain. The lambs repoſe upon it at their eaſe. Think, Percival, what they would have to ſuffer, on a bare or ſtony piece of ground! Their limbs are ſo extremely delicate, they could not but be very quickly injured. They have mothers, but thoſe mothers cannot make them up ſoft feather-beds. God therefore has provided for them better than the poor ſheep can, and made them this ſoft couch, where they may roll about, or ſleep entirely at their eaſe.

Percival. And then, papa, there is one good thing beſides, that they may eat it when they like.

Mr. Glaſſington. Oho! I underſtand your meaning: ſo here take your cake and currants.

Percival, (*biting off a bit.*) Oh! how good! There is nothing wanting but a ſtory while I am eating. Will you tell me,

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me one, papa; the prettieſt that you know?

Mr. Glaſſington. With all my heart. Your cake reminds me of a ſtory that I can tell about three cakes.

Percival. One, two, three cakes! Oh, what a charming ſtory that muſt be! So quick, papa, and tell it me.

Mr. Glaſſington. Come then firſt, and ſit beſide me. Be wholly at your eaſe, and then you will hear the better.

Percival. I am quite ready; ſo begin, papa.

THE THREE CAKES.

Mr. Glaſſington. There was a little boy named Henry, about your age. His parents had but lately fixed him at a boarding-ſchool. He was a ſpecial boy, for ever at his book, and happened once to get the higheſt place at exerciſes. His mama was told it. She could by no means avoid dreaming of the pleaſure; and when morning came, ſhe got up early, ſent to ſpeak with the cook, and ſaid as follows: Cook, you are to make a cake for Henry, who yeſ-

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terday was very good at ſchool. With all my heart, replied the cook, and ſet immediately about it. It was as big as—let me ſee,—as big as—as a hat when flapped. The cook had ſtuffed it with nice almonds, large Piſtachio nuts, and candied lemon-peel, and iced it over with a coat of ſugar, ſo that it was very ſmooth, and of a perfect white. The cake no ſooner was come home from baking, than the cook put on her things, and carried it to ſchool. When Henry firſt ſaw it, he jumped up and down like any Merry Andrew. He was not ſo patient as to wait 'till they could let him have a knife, but fell upon it tooth and nail.—He eat and eat 'till ſchool began, and after ſchool was over he eat again: at night too it was the ſame thing 'till bed-time. Nay, a little fellow that Henry had for a play-mate, told me that he put the cake upon his bolſter when he went to bed, and waked and waked a dozen times, that he might take a bit. I cannot ſo eaſily believe this laſt particular; but then it is very true, at leaſt, that on the morrow, when the day was hardly broke, he ſet about his favourite buſineſs once again, continuing

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continuing at it all the morning, and by noon had eaten it up. The dinner-bell now rung, but Henry, as one may fancy, had no ſtomach, and was vexed to ſee how heartily the other children eat. It was, however, worſe than this at five o'clock, when ſchool was over. His companions aſked him if he would not play at cricket, taw, or kites. Alas! he could not; ſo they played without him. In the mean time Henry could hardly ſtand upon his legs; he went and ſat down in a corner very gloomy, while the children ſaid one to another, What is the matter with poor Henry, who uſed to ſkip about, and be ſo merry? See how pale and ſorrowful he is! The maſter came himſelf, and ſeeing him, was quite alarmed. It was all loſt labour to interrogate him. Henry could not be brought to ſpeak a ſingle word. By great good luck, a boy at length came forward in the ſecret; and his information was, that Henry's mama had ſent him a great cake the day before, which he had ſwallowed in an inſtant as it were, and that his preſent ſickneſs was occaſioned only by his gluttony. On this, the maſter ſent for an apo-

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thecary, who ſoon ordered him a quantity of phyſic, phial after phial. Henry, as one would fancy, found it very naufeous, but was forced to take the whole for fear of dying; which, had he omitted it, would certainly have been the caſe. When ſome few days of phyſic and ſtrict regimen had paſſed, his health was re-eſtabliſhed as before; but his mama proteſted that ſhe would never let him have another cake.

Percival. He did not merit ſo much as the ſmell of ſuch a thing. But this is but one cake, papa: and you informed me that there were three, if you remember, in your ſtory.

Mr. Glaſſington. Patience! patience! here is another cake in what I am now going to tell.

Henry's maſter had another ſcholar, whoſe name was Francis. He had written his mama a very pretty letter, and it had not ſo much as a blotted ſtroke; in recompence for which ſhe ſent him likewiſe a great cake, and Francis thus ſaid to himſelf: I will not, like that glutton Henry, eat up my cake at once, and ſo be ſick as he was: no, I will make my pleaſure laſt a great

deal

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deal longer. So he took the cake, which he could hardly lift by reaſon of its weight, and watched the opportunity of ſlipping up into his chamber with it, where his box was, and in which he put it under lock and key. At play-time every day he ſlipped away from his companions, went up ſtairs a tip-toe, cut a tolerable ſlice off, ſwallowed it, put by the reſt, and then came down and mixed again with his companions. He continued this clandeſtine buſineſs all the week; and even then the cake was hardly half conſumed. But what enſued? At laſt the cake grew dry, and quickly after mouldy; nay, the very maggots got into it, and by that means had their ſhare; on which account it was not then worth eating, and our young curmudgeon was compelled to fling the reſt away with great reluctance. However, no one grieved for him.

Percival. No indeed; nor I, papa. What, keep a cake locked up ſeven days together, and not give one's friend a bit! That is monſtrous! But let us have the other now.

Mr. Glaſſington. There was another little gentleman who went to ſchool with Henry

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and Francis likewiſe, and his name was Gratian. His mama ſent *him* a cake one day, becauſe ſhe loved him, and indeed he loved her alſo very much. It was no ſooner come, than Gratian thus addreſſed his young companions: Come and look at what mama has ſent me; you muſt every one eat with me. They ſcarce needed ſuch a welcome piece of information twice, but all got round the cake, as you have doubtleſs ſeen the bees reſorting to a flower juſt blown. As Gratian was provided with a knife, he cut a great piece off, and then divided it into as many ſhares as he had brought boys together by ſuch a courteous invitation. Upon this he ranged them in a circle, and beginning with the boy who then ſtood next him, he went round, diſtributing to each his portion, 'till the ſhares were all diſpoſed of in this manner. Gratian then took up the reſt, and told them that he would eat his piece next day; on which he put it up, and went to play with his companions who were all ſolicitous to have him chuſe whatever game he thought might entertain him moſt.

A quarter of an hour had ſcarcely paſt as

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as they were playing, when a poor old man, who had a fiddle, came into the yard. He had a very long white beard, and being blind, was guided by a little dog who went before him with a collar round his neck. To this a cord was faſtened, which the poor blind man held in his hand. It was noticed with how much dexterity the little dog conducted him, and how he ſhook a bell which, I forgot to ſay, hung underneath his collar, when he came near any one, as if he had deſigned to ſay by ſuch an action, Do not throw down or run againſt my maſter. Being come into the yard, he ſat him down upon a ſtone, and hearing ſeveral children talking round him, My dear little gentlemen, ſaid he, I will play you all the pretty tunes that I know, if you will give me leave. The children wiſhed for nothing half ſo much. He put his violin in tune, and then thrummed over ſeveral jigs, and other ſcraps of muſic, which it was eaſy to conjecture had been new in former times. Little Gratian ſaw that while he played his merrieſt airs, a tear would now and then roll down his cheeks, on which he ſtooped to aſk him why he wept?

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wept? Becauſe, ſaid the muſician, I am very hungry. I have no one in the world that will give my dog or me a bit of any thing to eat. I wiſh I could but work, and get for both of us a morſel of ſomething; but I have loſt my ſtrength and ſight. Alas! I laboured hard till I was old, and now I want bread. The generous Gratian hearing this, wept too. He did not ſay a word: but ran to fetch the cake which he had deſigned to eat himſelf. He brought it out with joy, and as he ran along, began, Here, good old man, here is ſome cake for you. Where? replied the poor muſician, feeling with his hands; where is it? for I am blind, and cannot ſee you. Gratian put the cake into his hand, when laying down his fiddle on the ground, he wiped his eyes, and then began to eat. At every piece he put into his mouth, he gave his faithful little dog a bit, who came and ate out of his hand; and Gratian, ſtanding by him, ſmiled with pleaſure at the thought of having fed the poor old man when he was hungry.

Percival. Oh the good, good Gratian!—Let me have your knife, papa.

Mr.

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Mr. Glaſſington. Here, Percival; but why my knife?

Percival. I will tell you. I have only nibbled here a little of my cake, ſo pleaſed I was in liſtening to you! So I will cut it ſmooth. There—See how well I have ordered it!—Theſe ſcraps, together with the currants, will be more than I ſhall want for breakfaſt: and the firſt poor man that I meet going home, ſhall have the reſt, even though he ſhould not play upon the violin.

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THE LITTLE GAMBLERS.

A DRAMA, in ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. FLETCHER.		
HONORIA,	-	*his Daughter.*
AUGUSTINE,	-	*his Son.*
JONATHAN,	-	*Auguſtine's Neighbour.*
ALBERT,	-	*his Friend.*
RICH, VYSE, CRIB,	- -	*Gamblers.*

The SCENE *is in the garden of Mr. Fletcher; during the firſt act, in one part, after which it changes to another part.*

SCENE I.

Jonathan, Albert.

Albert. WHAT have you to do at Auguſtine's, then?

Jonathan. I want to have a little converſation with him, Albert; and you know him likewiſe.

Albert. Yes, by ſight. You have not always been ſo intimate, I fancy, as you are at preſent.

Jonathan.

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Jonathan. Not before my father took a lodging here, adjoining his apartments. We ſee one another often now; and laſt night were together for an hour or two, at cards.

Albert. I think, of late, you talk of nothing elſe but cards; and I have ſeen you frequently along with Rich and Vyſe, of whom I cannot ſay any good.

Jonathan. You know them but too well; and would to heaven that I had never ſeen them!

Albert. Is it ſo? But you may break off their acquaintance when you pleaſe.

Jonathan. That is not, at preſent, in my power. Would you betray me, if I told you ſomething?

Albert. We have long been friends; and would you fear to truſt me, Jonathan?

Jonathan. O my dear good Albert! they have made me miſerable, and engaged me to do things for which my father would renounce me if he knew them. I have not a moment's peace.

Albert. Alas! what are they?

Jonathan. Yeſterday they got me to go with them to a place where one *Crib* waited for

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for them. We ſat down to play, and I loſt all I had.

Albert. They cheated you, no doubt. But ſtill there is no great miſchief done; for never play again, and then your loſs will be a gain.

Jonathan. But this is not the whole. As I had no more money, and ſtill wanted to win back my loſs, I ſtill played on, and in the end they got poſſeſſion of my watch, my coat and waiſtcoat buttons, buckles, and, in ſhort, of every thing that I had worth ſelling. I owe Crib a guinea likewiſe, and he will tell my father, if I cannot find means to pay him to-day.

Albert. There is but one thing that you can do. Confeſs the whole directly to your father. I am ſure, he will pardon you on your repentance.

Jonathan. Never! never!

Albert. What will you do, then?

Jonathan. I dare not tell you.

Albert. Let me know it.

Jonathan. I communicated my diſtreſs to Rich and Vyſe, and they adviſed a ſcheme to extricate me.

Albert. A fine ſcheme, no doubt!

Jonathan.

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Jonathan. It is not certainly the faireſt, as you will ſay; but what am I at liberty to do? I have already introduced them to young Auguſtine. He has money.

Albert. Well; you do not intend to rob him, ſurely?

Jonathan. Heaven forbid! They only mean to ſerve him juſt as Crib ſerved me; and then we are to ſhare the winnings, ſo that I may pay my debt.

Albert. And ſo, becauſe you have been pillaged yourſelf, you would aſſiſt them to defraud your friend too? But how know you that Auguſtine will not win?

Jonathan. Oh! no: he plays quite fair.

Albert. And you like a ſharper?

Jonathan. Like a ſharper?

Albert. No; I am ſenſible that you play as fair as Auguſtine, and therefore you loſt. Now, as I hope you always mean to play ſo, how can you be ſure of winning?

Jonathan. I do not know how it is; but they inform me that they have certain ways by which they are ſure of winning.

Albert. Ways! They are knaviſh tricks, and would you uſe them? I am not rich, and yet I would not mend my fortune by your

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your certain ways. I am even ſorry that you have told me your intention.

Jonathan. My dear Albert, have compaſſion on me, and I promiſe——

Albert. Promiſe! What can bring me to aſſiſt in your deception?

Jonathan. No; I mean to ſay, that if I am but ſo lucky as to pay this odious Crib, I will break off all connexion with him and his friends; and never touch a card again. If I ſhould break this promiſe, you ſhall be at liberty to tell my father every thing. (*Albert ſhakes his head.*) Yes, every thing. And then, it will not reſt with me to cheat: I cannot if I would, and Crib has taken that upon himſelf. I ſhall but play my cards: they have promiſed that I ſhall be no loſer, but divide the profit with them.

Albert. Well; I will make a party with you.

Jonathan. I deſire no better, and will inſtantly invite young Auguſtine for the afternoon. His father is at preſent in the country, and will not come back perhaps theſe three weeks.

Albert.

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Albert. Quite convenient! But take notice, if you ſhould cheat him——

Jonathan. Do not talk ſo. I wiſh I had not told you the affair.

Albert. And ſo do I. Should I not then be anſwerable for it?

Jonathan. Anſwerable?

Albert. To my conſcience, ſurely. Can I ſee a worthy youth on the point of being cheated?

Jonathan. But you will not cheat him.

Albert. Jonathan, if you ſaw a thief pick even a ſtranger's pocket, ought you to keep ſilence?

Jonathan. Auguſtine will but loſe two, three, or poſſibly four guineas, and be cured of playing.

Albert. Juſt as you are cured. But here comes Auguſtine, I ſee.

SCENE II.

Jonathan, Albert, Auguſtine.

Auguſtine. Good morrow to you both.

Albert. Good morrow, Auguſtine.

Jonathan. What, you have not been down

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yet into the garden, when it is ſuch fine weather?

Albert. Mr. Auguſtine does not like to run about as you do, and can entertain himſelf in his apartment.

Auguſtine. Yes; but I have been already walking in the garden, and even breakfaſted with Honoria and my father in the grove.

Jonathan, (ſurpriſed.) Is he returned ſo ſoon? I fancy, you are not well pleaſed at that.

Auguſtine. Not well pleaſed! when he has been three weeks away?

Jonathan. I love my parents well enough; and yet, if they ſhould take it in their heads to travel, it would not vex me.

Auguſtine. And, for my part, I could wiſh my father never out of ſight, he is ſo extremely kind!

Jonathan. And mine ſo harſh, I muſt not think of pleaſure when he is near me.

Albert. Who can tell what pleaſures you expect?

Auguſtine. I thought you were in want of nothing on that head. Since we have lodged together, I have almoſt every day obſerved you

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you at the door; and when I have met you in the garden, never could I ſee you under any thing appearing like reſtraint.

Jonathan. No, no; I have always met you on days when my father dined abroad, and that is the only time that I have to uſe as I think proper; therefore I take care to turn it to account. But now your father is come home, I take it, we ſhall not ſee you quite ſo often in an evening?

Auguſtine. Why not, Jonathan? He refuſes me no pleaſure that I can aſk. However, I muſt ſay, I find no company like his; and he, too, has frequently ſaid that he thinks my company and Honoria's quite delightful.

Jonathan. What a charming father! So then he permits you to go out both when and where you like?

Auguſtine. He does, becauſe I always tell him where I am going,

Albert. And becauſe he knows that you never go but where you tell him?

Jonathan. What then do you do for entertainment, when you are both together?

Auguſtine. In the ſummer evenings, frequently we take a walk.

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Jonathan. In winter?

Auguſtine. We ſit down before the fire, and talk of fifty curious matters; or I ſtudy geography, and take a leſſon in the mathematics. Sometimes too, with Honoria and a friend or two, we act a little drama of ſome kind or other. You cannot think how that amuſes us!

Jonathan. But ſure ſuch different ſtudies are enough to crack your brain!

Auguſtine. On the contrary, they come of courſe, as if they were an amuſement.

Jonathan. A game at cards I ſhould ſuppoſe much more amuſing. Do you ever play?

Auguſtine. Yes, indeed; and my father frequently makes one.

Jonathan. And do you play for money?

Auguſtine. Doubtleſs; but a trifle, juſt enough to intereſt one in the game; and particularly, as by that, my father ſays, one learns to loſe with temper.

Albert. That is quite right; one ought to huſband, as they ſay, one's purſe.

Auguſtine. Oh! do not imagine that I want money. I have more than I can uſe.

Jonathan. How much?

Auguſtine.

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Auguſtine. A crown a week.

Jonathan. A good allowance, truly! And all that to purchaſe trifles?

Auguſtine. Yes, ſuch trifles as my father would not like to have me trouble him about; and that, I muſt acknowledge, makes me much more careful.

Albert. I believe ſo. One can hardly chuſe but know the worth of things, when one muſt pay for them one's ſelf.

Auguſtine. True, Albert. And beſides, one naturally ſaves in that caſe, as I myſelf have found it; ſo that what with preſents and ſome other matters, I have now five guineas in my pocket, without reckoning ſilver.

Jonathan. Such a deal! And how can you employ it?

Auguſtine. Have I nothing then to buy? However, I can diſpoſe of it otherwiſe. I pay to have our footman's daughter put to ſchool; and every Monday morning ſend a trifle to a writing-maſter that I had once, and who is now grown blind: theſe, both together, make up ſomething; and I keep the reſt for ordinary uſes, and among them, for play.

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Jonathan. At which you are tolerably lucky. You remember, you won half a crown of me the other night, at *One-and-thirty.*

Auguſtine. I was ſorry, as I always am, to win of friends.

Jonathan. Then you ſhall have an opportunity at night of loſing, if you think fit. Are you engaged?

Auguſtine. No; I ſhall ſtay at home. My father is to draw out a petition for a widow woman, who would get into an almshouſe.

Jonathan. That is well: and mine goes out at five. Come then to me, and I will endeavour to amuſe you. We ſhall have Rich, Vyſe, and Crib.

Auguſtine. I will run and aſk my father's leave. Shall you be here when I return.

Jonathan. No, I muſt go and give them notice of the party; but your anſwer Mr. Albert will bring to me.

SCENE III.

Albert, Auguſtine.

Auguſtine. Will you go in with me, Mr. Albert? I am ſure, my father will be very glad to ſee you: he has often told me what a great eſteem he has conceived this long while for you.

Albert. I am very happy in his partiality. The eſteem of ſuch a gentleman is highly honourable; but at preſent I am rather indiſpoſed, and ſhall remain, with your permiſſion, in the garden.

Auguſtine. Do; a turn or two will ſettle you, and I ſhall not be abſent long.

SCENE IV.

Albert, (muſing.)

I do not know what to do in this affair! Poor Jonathan is afflicted! I ſhould like to extricate him; but then to let the worthy Auguſtine be cheated! No, the accomplice is not better than the robber; and to favour roguery is juſt as bad as doing it. I will go therefore and tell the whole. But,

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ſoftly! here comes Honoria. Let me firſt of all do every thing in my power to aſſiſt her in preſerving Auguſtine from the danger, and yet not betray my friend.

SCENE V.

Albert, Honoria.

Honoria. What, you here, Mr. Albert, and alone? I thought I ſaw my brother talking with you.

Albert. He has juſt now left me.

Honoria. I ſhould wiſh him never to leave you, if his company were but agreeable to you: I ſhould not be uneaſy then.

Albert. You do me honour, miſs; but ſurely Mr. Auguſtine is too ſenſible to give you any pain.

Honoria. I have no pain while he keeps company with ſuch as you: but ſhall I come directly to the point? I do not think any good of thoſe companions of Jonathan's; and he wants by all means to mix with them.

Albert. I have not yet perceived that their company has hurt him.

Honoria. True; but my poor brother, I muſt

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muſt ſay, is innocent, and ſomewhat credulous: he judges every one to be like himſelf. What would become of him, if thoſe whom he thinks his friends were what they ſhould not be? I have remarked, that you do not much approve of Jonathan's intimates.

Albert. To ſay the truth, my dear young lady, I ſhould rather wiſh that Jonathan would be ſatisfied with Auguſtine's friendſhip. There is one advantage, notwithſtanding, that his father watches over him, as yours does over Auguſtine, and inſtructs him what to do.

Honoria. The miſchief often is remarked too late; it is eaſier to prevent than cure it.

Albert. I am ſure, you love your brother tenderly, and therefore hear me; but tell nobody that I mentioned what I am going now to ſay. Young Jonathan has prevailed upon him, juſt before you entered, to make one with him and his three intimates. They mean to play, no doubt; but do your utmoſt to divert your brother from partaking with them. I deſigned to wait here for his anſwer, but do not think it proper that I ſhould carry it. I make

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no doubt but he will bring it presently. Pray do not judge amiss of me that I retire; and think of the advice which my duty, as a friend to Augustine, bade me give you.

SCENE VI.

Honoria, (alone.)

As a friend! This looks a little serious! Ah, my poor dear brother! should it chance that you, who are at present all the joy and consolation of my father, were to change, and be the cause of his affliction for the time to come!

SCENE VII.

Augustine, Honoria.

Augustine. My father's friends are willing, I can see, to take the earliest opportunity of paying him their compliments on his arrival, just as if he had been absent for a twelvemonth. I could hardly thrust a word in.

Honoria. You had something then of consequence to tell him.

Augustine.

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Auguſtine. Of the greateſt conſequence to me. I want to paſs the evening with my friends.

Honoria. With Mr. Jonathan, no doubt?

Auguſtine. Yes.

Honoria. I thought ſo. You might eaſily have gueſſed, however, that ſuch a friend as Jonathan does not pleaſe me.

Auguſtine. Truly, Jonathan is greatly to be pitied, being ſo unfortunate as not to have a place in your good graces! And what ſhould he be, to merit ſuch an honour?

Honoria. He ſhould be—juſt ſuch a one as you are.

Auguſtine. Do you mean to joke?

Honoria. No: I am very ſerious, I aſſure you; and conſider you as a very amiable young man without a fault, unleſs indeed it be the want of due politeneſs to your ſiſter.

Auguſtine. And why ſo? becauſe that ſiſter is a little critic, and pretends to greater underſtanding than her brother.

Honoria. Truly, I had quite forgot to mention modeſty, when I was drawing up your panegyric.

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Auguſtine. But what means this prating? And pray tell me, why theſe intimations with regard to Jonathan! Do you know him?

Honoria. I would know him by his actions.

Auguſtine. Are you always with him, to remark them?

Honoria. I can gueſs them from the company that he keeps.

Auguſtine. I underſtand you perfectly: his company diſpleaſes you, becauſe I am one of his acquaintance.

Honoria. Surely, brother, he muſt have acquaintances of longer ſtanding than yourſelf; and I ſpeak of them as I would of good for nothing fellows.

Auguſtine. Good for nothing fellows?

Honoria. Yes, that play, and practiſe every diſhonourable trick to win their adverſary's money, and then ſpend it more diſhonourably ſtill.

Auguſtine. Oh! what two great crimes! they play when they are together; and they ſpend their winnings as they pleaſe. We do the ſame, I fancy. And beſides, you

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say, they play to win; but they have often lost to me.

Honoria. Yes, yes; they have lost their copper, and have won your silver.

Augustine. Well, and if they have, the loss was mine, not yours. But this is just like what my sister is. She would be sorry if she could not vex me in my pleasures, notwithstanding I do every thing to heighten her's.

Honoria, (*taking him by the hand.*) No, brother; every pleasure that you can have, is also mine; but for the world, I would not have your pleasures hurt you, and deprive me of the satisfaction which I receive from loving you.

Augustine. I know indeed that you love me; but am hurt to find you fancy me incapable to guide myself.

Honoria. And yet you would not be the first that—but here comes my father.

SCENE VIII.

Honoria, Auguſtine, Mr. Fletcher.

Mr. Fletcher. My dear children, I have juſt now been enjoying a delightful ſatisfaction!

Honoria. That of being viſited on your return by your acquaintance, I ſuppoſe you mean? But certainly your friends muſt cherish you, when we who are reſtrained by your authority, rejoice as much as they can do.

Auguſtine. Yes, truly; for without you we can find no pleaſure.

Mr. Fletcher. And yet you muſt learn to do without me; ſince, according to the ordinary courſe of nature, I ſhall certainly go firſt.

Honoria. O ſir, would you afflict us at a time, when we thought of nothing but rejoicing?

Auguſtine. Yes, ſir, you will live, and long we hope, for our advantage. But let us talk no more on ſuch a gloomy ſubject. —I have a little favour to requeſt.

Mr. Fletcher. Well, come, let us hear it.

Auguſtine.

Auguſtine. Maſter Jonathan—you are acquainted with his father—Well, he has invited me to ſpend the evening with him.

Mr. Fletcher. You have a new acquaintance then. I am glad that you pick up ſuch good company ſo near you.

Honoria. You hear that? good company!

Auguſtine. I think him ſo; I have already ſat down with him ſeveral times, and he has introduced me alſo to ſome friends of his.

Honoria. Good company, too, I ſuppoſe?

Auguſtine. Yes, for ſure I muſt know them better than you.

Mr. Fletcher. When I uſed the words *good company*, I meant diſcreet and well bred.

Auguſtine. Yes, ſir, extremely ſo.

Honoria. And how are you to know that they are ſuch, as you have only ſeen them once or twice?

Auguſtine. But have I not been hours together with them?

Mr. Fletcher. How did your acquaintance begin?

Honoria. At play.

Auguſtine.

Auguſtine. And why not? To? My father lets me play.

Mr. Fletcher. It is true, for recreation, and for ſuch a ſum as being gained will not induce the immoderate love of money, or if loſt, not put one out of temper; and this likewiſe at a time when nothing can be done more profitable.

Honoria. But I thought, ſir, ſomething might be always done more profitable?

Auguſtine. Yes, (I ſpeak of myſelf, for inſtance,) if I could but nail my thoughts continually to ſome book or other.

Mr. Fletcher. Honoria's remark is not amiſs. One may employ a leiſure evening better than at play, no doubt, if people would be always rational, or even innocently mirthful; but as ſcandal ſometimes will go round, or folly; in ſuch caſe, you know, I bid you play, and often take a part myſelf.

Honoria. And theſe I doubt not, brother, are the reaſons why you play?

Auguſtine. I do not ſee any right that you have to catechize me.

Mr. Fletcher. But why take offence at what ſhe ſays through friendſhip?

Auguſtine.

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Auguſtine. Rather, ſir, from a deſire to hurt me in your thoughts.

Mr. Fletcher. Can you conceive ſuch notions of your ſiſter?

Honoria, (*with a tone of tenderneſs.*) Brother!

Auguſtine, (*with the ſame tone.*) Honoria, pardon me: I am in the wrong to tax you thus: but grant, however, your inſinuations unavoidably muſt hurt me.

Mr. Fletcher. Her ſuſpicions may have ſome foundation that does not reflect upon you: we need not fear, I think, our diſpoſitions towards each other, ſo united as we are. (*Honoria and Auguſtine take their father by the hand.*)

Honoria. O ſir, how good you are!

Auguſtine. You lay by all a father's rights, and are our friend.

Mr. Fletcher. If I were any other than your friend, I ſhould not be completely qualified to bring you up. I might perhaps connive at your neglecting outward ceremonies of reſpect; but not your failure in that confidence which I expect from your affection. You ſhould not have a ſecret that you would keep hid from me, as whenever

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whenever you may chance to be in danger, my experience may preserve you from it. Let me therefore ask you, Honoria, what are the objections that you have formed against your brother's new acquaintances?

Honoria. They are always taken up with cards.

Auguſtine. Who told you ſo?

Honoria. No matter from whom I have my information: the thing is, whether it be true?

Mr. Fletcher. I have already told you what I think of playing: every thing depends upon the game that you play.

Auguſtine. Oh! it needs no great attention: it is the game of *One-and-thirty.*

Mr. Fletcher. I confeſs, I do not approve it much.

Auguſtine. Why not? There can be nothing in the world ſo innocent. Whoever is one and thirty, or the neareſt to it, wins.

Mr. Fletcher. And do you know that it is what we call a game of chance?

Auguſtine. Becauſe one has a chance to win or loſe? And muſt not this be ſaid of every game?

Mr. Fletcher. With this material differ-

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ence, that at *one-and-thirty*, chance alone decides; whereas, in many others, skill is to be shown. In short, one wants but fingers, and no head for games of chance: and in my thought, such games are utterly unworthy of a thinking man.

Honoria. They cannot even amuse one.

Augustine. Do not say so, dear sister. There is a deal of pleasure in expecting such or such a card as one may want.

Mr. Fletcher. Because the love of money makes it so. And as this love of money operates very powerfully, it is a strong temptation for ten thousand rogues to follow gaming as a trade; and therefore unsuspecting people generally are their dupes.

Augustine. Do you believe so, sir? but how?

Honoria. I fancy, they must have some art or other, to arrange the pack in such a way, as to obtain what cards they want.

Mr. Fletcher. Yes, that is in reality their secret. I cannot tell their method; but am certain, that they do employ some method, and have seen deplorable examples of it in my travels.

Augustine.

Auguſtine. Oh! pray tell us what examples?

Mr. Fletcher. With a deal of pleaſure. When at Spa, I was acquainted with a young gentleman, who loſt one night above twelve thouſand pounds, which was his all.

Honoria. His all! poor youth! and what did he do to live?

Auguſtine. He muſt have been beſide himſelf.

Mr. Fletcher. Deſpair obtained poſſeſſion of his features, when he ſaw his fortune thus irretrievably loſt. He looked ſo frightful, that I was forced to turn away my ſight; he gnaſhed his teeth, plucked up his hair by handfuls, and beat violently on his breaſt: he gaſped and panted like a dying man, and left the room quite mad.

Auguſtine. And pray, ſir, among thoſe who won his money, was there no one who would give it back, as I ſhould certainly have done?

Mr. Fletcher. They kept their ſeats; and ſtill continued playing on; or if they turned off their attention from the cards, it was to look upon him with contempt.

Honoria.

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Honoria. The wicked wretches!

Mr. Fletcher. But the worſt part of the ſtory is as follows: That this poor young man deſtroyed himſelf before the morning.

Honoria. Oh! how ſhocking!

Auguſtine. Dreadful! and from henceforth, ſir, I will never touch a card, I promiſe you. I'll run and tell this to Jonathan.

Mr. Fletcher. Softly, ſoftly: you are always much too haſty in your reſolutions. One ſhould never wholly give a pleaſure up, becauſe, when carried to exceſs, it may be hurtful. I have often told you, that a game at cards, when friends are met together, is amuſing, innocent, and even uſeful.

Honoria. Uſeful, ſir?

Mr. Fletcher. Yes, uſeful; as it teaches us to bear our fortune; and not to triumph when we win, or be dejected at our little loſſes.

Auguſtine. Heaven be praiſed, I am not ſo fond of money as to hurt another by my inſults in good fortune; or to ſhew that I am hurt myſelf, by being vexed when I am unlucky; but to ſhun what poſſibly

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ſibly might happen, it will be better for me not to viſit either Jonathan or his friends.

Mr. Fletcher. You would only prove your weakneſs, if this ſhould be your final reſolution: for at leaſt you have it in your power, when with them, to refrain from playing.

Auguſtine. Oh, I know them: they would abſolutely make me play.

Mr. Fletcher. Well, play as much as they would have you, ſince by that means you will gain a better knowledge of them. But inſtead of going to this Jonathan, or his friends, invite them hither. You may alſo tell them that Honoria perhaps will make one.

Honoria. But, ſir——

Mr. Fletcher. Yes, yes; I have a reaſon.

Honoria. But ſuppoſe they win my money?

Mr. Fletcher. You ſhall have it all from me again. And tell them, Auguſtine, that you expect a friend, whom you will prevail on to ſit down and play amongſt them.

Auguſtine. But you know, ſir, I expect no friend.

Mr. Fletcher. When I inform you of a friend

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friend that you have at home, who will be with you, cannot you guess what friend I mean?

Honoria. Sly! Why sure you understand papa? he means himself.

Mr. Fletcher. Yes, Augustine; for you recollect, just now you said that I *was* your friend.

Augustine. Oh yes; they will play indeed, if you are of the party!

Mr. Fletcher. Therefore you shall not inform them who the friend is that you expect. As soon as I have finished my petition, I will return and join you. I shall see what is proper to be done. 'Till then, play with them, and at any game they chuse.

Augustine. So then you would have me run to Jonathan and his friends?

Mr. Fletcher. Yes, yes: and do not forget to desire Albert's company. I shall be glad to see him. All his masters praise him wonderfully, and you yourself have frequently been lavish in his commendations.

Honoria. He merits every tittle of it.

Augustine.

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Auguſtine. One word more, ſir: ſhall we meet here in the garden?

Mr. Fletcher. As you pleaſe. The weather is ſo fine, you may ſtep here into the ſummer-houſe, it will hold all your company.

SCENE IX.

Mr. Fletcher, Honoria.

Honoria. I fear, ſir, your preſence will be much more neceſſary here than mine.

Mr. Fletcher. You fear?

Honoria. Yes, ſir; for I have told you, Maſter Albert was not long ſince with me. From ſome words which he dropped, I have reaſon to believe that my brother's company have laid a plot to cheat him of his money.

Mr. Fletcher. All the better, if he finds himſelf their victim. I will hide myſelf behind the ſummer-houſe there, juſt by that partition, and hear every word of their diſcourſe. They will enter here, and cannot poſſibly diſcover me; but in the interim take you care: and if you ſee their roguery, ſeem as if you did not.

Honoria.

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Honoria. I shall find it hard, sir, to dissemble. It will be painful to me, should I see my brother prove the object of their ridicule, and fall a victim to his open nature.

Mr. Fletcher. By himself alone can he be fully undeceived; and in that case I shall with less difficulty persuade him to be attentive for the future in the choice of his connexions, and so cure him likewise of his love for gaming, which, I must acknowledge, he seems ready to adopt as a habit.

Honoria. How, sir, can he have a thought of going thus to cards? He ought to know himself. He is so credulous, that every sharper must suppose him proper for his purpose! and so warm, that at the first ill luck he falls into a passion!

Mr. Fletcher. Yes, that is his just character. I did not think you so observant, Honoria.

Honoria. One should be in truth observant of another's conduct, if one means to serve him. And—

Mr. Fletcher. A knock; it must be Jonathan's friends: they do not desire to lose

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loſe a moment. I now leave you. I will go round about and gain my ſtation.—(*He goes out.*)

SCENE X.

Honoria, (alone.)

How I long to know the iſſue of all this! Alas! dear brother! who can tell but your future happineſs in life depends on the deciſion of the preſent afternoon.

SCENE XI.

Honoria, Auguſtine, Jonathan, Albert, Rich, Vyſe, Crib.

Jonathan, (to Honoria.) I was afraid, Miſs Honoria, as I mentioned to your brother, that our company might incommode you: but he would not—

Auguſtine. Incommode her! I am in hopes that ſhe will keep us company.

Honoria. With all my heart, if you think proper, gentlemen.

Vyſe, (with conſtraint.) You do us honour, madam.

Crib.

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Crib, (*whiſpering Jonathan.*) This is quite unlucky! In politeneſs we muſt play whatever game ſhe likes. You ſhould not have conſented to come here.

Auguſtine. Perhaps I ſhall be able, gentlemen, to introduce a friend of mine to your acquaintance likewiſe.

Rich. Shall you?

Auguſtine. Yes, and not without a pocket full of gold.

Jonathan, (*aſide.*) That is well.

Honoria. We will ſtay here in the garden, if you pleaſe.

Albert. We cannot do better. We ſhall have the pleaſure of a charming walk.

Rich. Do you deſign to walk?

Albert. What elſe?

Vyſe. Why, play.

Albert. But I do not underſtand your play; and if I did, I ſhall not wiſh to loſe my money.

Crib. Wiſh to loſe it! juſt as if it were certain that you would loſe it!

Albert. Sir, with you particularly. You are too ſkilful a great deal for me.

Auguſtine. If I ſhould win, I promiſe, I will return you every farthing.

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Jonathan. And I too.

Rich and Vyſe. And we too.

Albert. You would make a fool of me. To loſe my money, and receive it back, or on the other hand, win yours, and keep it, is not what I do: ſo do not concern yourſelves on my account. I will ſee you play, or elſe walk up and down the garden hereabouts.

Honoria. My father, gentlemen, cannot have the honour to receive you, (*Rich and his company ſeem rejoiced,*) but has bid me entertain you. Auguſtine will get ready ſome refreſhments, and I will run and fetch the cards.

Crib. That is needleſs: I have a pack about me.

Auguſtine. How! about you?

Crib. Yes: I ſtudy them.

Honoria. And have you fiſh too?

Crib. I ſhall beg you to get us them, unleſs we are to ſtake our money.

Jonathan, (*aſide to Crib.*) You remember, I have no money?—(*aloud.*) No, no: we ſhall hardly know what we are about. And ſo, miſs, if you will be ſo kind—

Honoria.

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Honoria. Enough, I will bring the bag. Come, brother.

SCENE XII.

Jonathan, Albert, Rich, Vyſe, Crib.

Vyſe, (*going into the ſummer-houſe with Jonathan, Rich, and Crib, while Albert walks about.*) I am ſorry we are here.

Rich. What matters, ſince the father is not here?

Crib. You ſhould not have conſented to the place of meeting, Jonathan.

Jonathan. Here, or in my room, what difference doth that make?

Rich. Well then, when Auguſtine has loſt every thing, we will carry off his money, and go play where we think proper.

Vyſe. We ſhall empty, very likely, the young lady's pocket alſo.

Crib. Yes; that is what I look for: let us take care, however. We will put in our fiſh at two-pence each, for half a dozen deals or ſo; and when the game grows warm, and they have won a little, we will then make them double.

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Jonathan. You remember your promiſe, Crib?

Crib. Do not you be uneaſy. We know one another. All our loſs ſhall be in counters, and we will have no reckoning when the game is over. I will diſpoſe the cards in ſuch a way, that we muſt loſe at firſt, and that will draw them on.

Jonathan. But, Crib, you know, you fleeced me quite the other day; and I have now but ſixpence in my pocket. How am I to pay my loſs?

Crib. Your loſs! we ſhall be ſure to win, if we attend to what we do.

Vyſe. I ſhould be glad if Auguſtine's friend would come: he will be another pigeon that we ſhall pluck.

Rich. Yes, yes! I know of none ſo eaſy to be duped as theſe ſame bookiſh fellows.

Crib. We had beſt begin, that they may find us buſy when they come. (*He takes his cards out.*) Stay; I will put them ſo that you may loſe. (*He ſhuffles them.*) Now you ſhall ſee. (*He gives three cards to Jonathan, Rich, and Vyſe; lays down as many for himſelf, and then addreſſes Jonathan.*) Do you ſtand?

Jonathan.

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Jonathan. No: I beg.

Crib. There.

Jonathan, (*looking at the cards.*) Out!

Crib, (*to Vyſe.*) And you?

Vyſe. One card, but not a high one.

Crib. Much good may it do you!—there.

Vyſe. Out too!

Crib, (*to Rich.*) Now you are to be out. You beg, I ſuppoſe?

Rich. No; as Vyſe and Jonathan are both out, I ſtand.

Crib. And ſo will I. How many are you?

Vyſe. Twenty-five.

Crib. And I juſt thirty. I have won: And yet I might have loſt by doing the reverſe of what I did; as you ſhall ſee the two firſt games that we play, when Auguſtine and the lady comes, who having won, will then have no objection to play higher.

Jonathan. But how can you be ſure of winning when you pleaſe?

Crib. You have already paid for your inſtruction, and I will let you know the ſecret. I tell every thing to friends, when I have pocketed their money. With my art

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you will win of others what you have loſt of me, and ſo be quits.

Jonathan. Well, let me know.

Crib. You ſee, *(ſhewing the cards,)* the ten and court cards are a very little longer than the reſt, and all the ſmaller ones, as high as five, not reckoning in the aces, ſomewhat broader; by which means I can at pleaſure bring the picture cards, &c. to the top in ſhuffling, and the five, and thoſe below it, to the bottom. I contrive to give you two of thoſe on the top; and afterward, the other from the bottom: ſo that at the moſt you have but five-and-twenty, and will therefore generally beg. Well then, you have it from the top, and muſt infallibly be out.

Jonathan. I underſtand you.

Crib. This is all my leſſon, and you have it upon eaſy terms, aſk Rich and Vyſe elſe, who ſo profitably follow my inſtructions. But I ſee the lady coming in, ſo puſh about the deal.

SCENE

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SCENE XIII.

Jonathan, Rich, Vyſe, Crib, Honoria.

Honoria, (*putting down a box upon the table, with a pack of cards and fiſh and counters in it.*) You do not loſe any time, I ſee.

Crib. I was but ſhowing Mr. Jonathan a new game.

Jonathan. Will you ſit down with us? We ſhall have that honour?

Honoria. If I knew the game that you play——

Vyſe. It is a very eaſy game. It is only *One-and-thirty.*

Rich. Had you never ſeen it played, you will know enough to beat us at it by the ſecond deal.

Honoria. I know a little of it. It would perhaps be better for me not to play with thoſe that know it ſo completely as you gentlemen; however, if it gives you pleaſure——

Jonathan. Oh yes, miſs, the greateſt in the world.

Vyſe. And even ſhould you win, too, all our money.

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Honoria, (*with a ſmile.*) Yes, that is my intention.

Rich. You will be ſcarce the richer for it in the end; we play but for a trifle.

Jonathan, (*with impatience.*) Well! and what are we about? We paſs away the time in talking.

Crib. We muſt wait for Maſter Auguſtine; it is but juſt that we ſhould amuſe him; we are his gueſts.

SCENE XIV.

Jonathan, Rich, Vyſe, Crib, Honoria, Auguſtine.

Auguſtine. Here, here I am. The ſervant will be with us very ſhortly. I have ordered ſome refreſhment.

Jonathan. Come, ſir, we are waiting for you.

Auguſtine. Thank you.

Vyſe. Let us give out the fiſh.

Rich. There are ſix of us: to every one two dozen, and ten counters; that is, ten dozen more.

Jonathan. But how much every fiſh?

Crib. Juſt what the lady pleaſes.

Honoria.

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Honoria. Oh, it is rather as you like.

Auguſtine. Our fiſh were two-pence each, when laſt we played together; five ſtaked every deal by each, and half a dozen the bon-ace.

Honoria. Well, be it ſo.

Crib. Then here goes to begin. (*Crib takes the cards and deals. The lady and her brother win by Crib's contrivance three times running.*)

Honoria. Hey! hey! if we go on in this way, I think, I ſhall ſoon fulfil my prophecy.

Crib. While we play ſo low as two-pence, we ſhall never ruin one another.

Vyſe. Well then, ſhall we make it four-pence?

Auguſtine. Oh, with all my heart. I have ſo much money, you cannot break me eaſily. (*He ſhakes his purſe, at which Crib and his companions look with pleaſure.*)

Honoria. And I can riſque as much, I fancy, as my brother.

Crib. We muſt firſt then pay our debts, that we may have our full account of fiſh and counters.—Let me ſee, (*after having counted.*) I have loſt one counter, and ſix

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fiſh; that is, eighteen fiſh; and eighteen twice is ſix-and-thirty—juſt three ſhillings: there they are.

Rich. I have all my counters, but am maſter of no more than two poor fiſh; that is two-and-twenty loſt, or three and eight-pence. There.

Vyſe. I am come off much the worſt. Two counters gone, and twice as many fiſh; which come to four and eight-pence. —I put down a crown, and take up four-pence.

Auguſtine. Well, and you, Maſter Jonathan?

Jonathan. I have loſt leaſt. No more than fifteen fiſh, or half-a-crown. I will change a guinea, when we riſe, to pay it.

Honoria. Good! So now I will ſee my winnings. One, two, three—Three counters, and three fiſh. That is ſix and ſix-pence juſt: of which I take four ſhillings, and the two and ſix-pence, Maſter Jonathan, you ſhall owe me.

Auguſtine. So that all the reſt is to pay my four-and-forty fiſh.——It is comical enough, however, that we ſhould be the only winners!

Rich.

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Rich. Oh, I always loſe, for my part.

Jonathan. So now the fiſh are four-pence?

Auguſtine. Yes, that is ſettled.

Crib, (ſhuffling the cards.) Come, I will deal.

SCENE THE LAST.

Jonathan, Rich, Vyſe, Crib, Honoria, Auguſtine, Albert, (who came in a little while before,) Mr. Fletcher.

Mr. Fletcher, (to Jonathan and his friends, who ſeem confounded.) Pray do not diſturb yourſelves.

Auguſtine. Sit down: my father does not come to interrupt us. I informed you that I might have a friend to introduce, and he will play with us. Won't you, ſir?

Honoria. O yes: pray play; we ſhall be very glad to get your money, and theſe gentlemen, I know, will like to ſhare it too.

Mr. Fletcher. With all my heart. So every one ſit down. *(To Jonathan and his friends, who ſeem quite overwhelmed.)* But what is the matter, gentlemen? Are you

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afraid to play with me? I can assure you, I am no sharper. (*They sit down at last.*) You (*to Crib*) were dealing when I entered; so continue, pray; but first let us see, have you a pack complete? (*Crib wants to drop the cards, but Mr. Fletcher secures, and looks them over.*) It is droll enough to have the court-cards all together thus! but, Honoria, why not give us cleaner cards? Pray hand me over those—

Honoria. It was not my fault, sir, as this gentleman (*pointing to Crib*) had brought them in his pocket; and the play was going on when I came in with ours.

Mr. Fletcher, (*to Albert.*) What, you here, Master Albert! I am very glad to see you; but pray, do not you play?

Albert. I would rather be a looker on: you know I have nothing, sir, to throw away.

Mr. Fletcher. You are in the right to think so, and your prudence merits praise. (*To Crib.*) But come, sir; here are better cards, (*Crib takes them with a trembling hand,*) at least a little cleaner: what is your game? Pray tell me.

Augustine. One-and-thirty.

Mr.

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Mr. Fletcher. And for what?

Honoria. No more than four-pence a fiſh. I have won all this! four ſhillings; and two and ſix-pence owing me by Mr. Jonathan, who wants change.

Mr. Fletcher, (*aſide.*) Wants change! I ſmell a rat! (*to Honoria.*) So much as four-pence! that is a little too much; but no matter, if we have all of us enough to pay our loſings. So let us ſee your money. Mr. Jonathan, I begin with you; (*Jonathan is confuſed.*) What ails you? Are you taken ill?

Jonathan. Ye-e-es, ſir—Let me—

Mr. Fletcher. What is all this? one ſtammers, and the other ſeems confounded! (*to Crib.*) You, ſir, too, are diſconcerted?

Auguſtine. What is the matter with them?

Mr. Fletcher. It is high time that I ſhould explain the reaſon of this ſtrange behaviour. Auguſtine, you obſerve the effects of a guilty conſcience. Happily they are not yet ſo totally abandoned as to hide their villainy beneath a brazen front, and bully in their own defence.

Auguſtine. What ſay you, ſir? Sure you are miſtaken: It is my ſiſter, as ſhe told you,

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you, and myſelf, that are the only winners.

Crib, (*taking courage.*) Have we failed to pay our loſings, every one, but Maſter Jonathan?

Jonathan. No: but why? becauſe you have cheated me already out of all my money.

Mr. Fletcher. I was right in thinking that they would unmaſk themſelves: And, Auguſtine, you may ſee what villains you have choſen for your companions.

Auguſtine. Oh, I cannot think ſo, ſir.

Mr. Fletcher. Well then, Mr. Jonathan, do you ſpeak; you ſeem leaſt hardened. Tell me, was there not a plot among you to defraud my children?

Jonathan. Yes indeed, ſir; but for my part, I aſſure you, I was forced into it. All my wiſh was to get back a part of what I had loſt before. If you but knew how much this wicked fellow has ſqueezed from me, for the other two are nothing to him, you would ſay that he ſhould be ſent to priſon.

Mr. Fletcher. You have well deſerved your

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your loſs, by mixing with ſuch company; but tell me how much you have loſt?

Jonathan. Two guineas, and a few odd ſhillings with them all together; and my watch, coat buttons, buckles, and a guinea more in money afterwards, in private with the talleſt: but the guinea I ſtill owe him; and he threatened, if I did not prevail on Maſter Auguſtine to ſit down and play this evening, that he would tell my father.

Albert. This, ſir, I can ſay in Jonathan's favour, that he gave me juſt the ſame account this morning, and was grieved at what he thought himſelf compelled to do. The grand criminal is Crib, the talleſt; the two others in compariſon—

Mr. Fletcher. I comprehend what you would ſay; and therefore, (*to Rich and Vyſe,*) little raſcals, get you gone this inſtant. Perhaps it is not as yet too late that I ſhould think of reſcuing you from infamy; and therefore I will inform your parents of your conduct.

Rich and Vyſe, (*dropping on their knees.*) Pardon us this once, ſir, we beſeech you; and we will never come within your doors again.

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Mr. Fletcher. No; I ſhall take care that you never do; but then it is not enough that my children ſhould be ſafe in future from your roguery, I owe the ſame good ſervice to all fathers. What perverſity! at ſuch an age not only to be gamblers, but vile cheats! the hatefulleſt of human beings! However, out of pity to your youth, and from the hope which I have of your amendment, I will do no more than tell your parents; but if ever I am told that you ſtill continue your deteſtable employment, I will make known your infamy to every one about us. So be gone, and never let me ſee you here again. Be gone, I ſay. (*Rich and Vyſe withdraw in ſilence and confuſion.*) And you, ſir, is it true that you have got theſe things from Jonathan?

Crib, (*with heſitation.*) Yes, ſir.

Mr. Fletcher. You have cheated him, but that is no matter. Jonathan loſt them, and has merited his fortune. We will put a value on them.

Jonathan. I could wiſh, indeed, that I had ſufficient to redeem my loſs.

Auguſtine. O ſir, if all that I have in my pocket be ſufficient, Jonathan may command

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mand it.' I have full five guineas, take them for the ſervice of my friend.

Mr. Fletcher. Auguſtine, this is very generous.

Jonathan. What, to me ſuch friendſhip?

Auguſtine. We are neighbours both, and you may pay me weekly, or in any way you pleaſe. (*Crib gives Jonathan his things.*)

Mr. Fletcher, (to Jonathan.) Is every thing returned you?

Jonathan. Yes, ſir; and I am ſaved by your generoſity and Auguſtine's from the reſentment of my father. Oh, I will never riſque his gifts again in ſuch a manner.

Mr. Fletcher, (offering Crib the money.) Here is the value of your theft, for ſuch it muſt be called; and you ſhall have it to ſubſiſt upon in priſon till you are called to anſwer for your crime, as poſſibly you may not have the means without it. Nay, expect not by ſolicitation to divert the rigour of my juſtice. Your ſeduction of two youths, your felony upon the property of this young man, and your attempt to make him inſtrumental in the robbery of another, well deſerve that rigour. This muſt be your ſentence; ſo withdraw a little for the

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the preſent. (*Crib withdraws, and weeps for very rage.*)

Jonathan, (falling on his knees to Mr. Fletcher.) O dear ſir! from what a gulph of ruin you preſerve me! And without you what would have been my evil fortune, when thruſt out from home, and perhaps ſtigmatized in public for my vices? I am then indebted to your pity for my reputation, my repoſe, and my exiſtence. (*He riſes and embraces Auguſtine.*) And my generous Auguſtine, you whom I was going to——

Auguſtine. Never think more of it; I do not; and for the time to come be happy.

Mr. Fletcher. Maſter Albert's teſtimony of your grief at being forced into this plot, alleviates your offence; and therefore you may ſtill continue to viſit my ſon; but after what he has juſt done in your behalf, I ſhall account you the moſt profligate of youths, unleſs you ſtudy to deſerve his friendſhip.

Jonathan. Oh, I will do ſo. Rely upon me, ſir.

Mr. Fletcher. And as for you, dear Albert, I have reaſon to be charmed with what ſo many tongues have told me of your modeſty

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modeſty and virtue. By your laudable example, you may very much contribute to the happineſs of Auguſtine.—I requeſt you to be often with him; and if I can ſhew my gratitude by being ſerviceable to your happineſs, I ſhall promote it with as much affection as your parents would do.

Albert. Your eſteem, dear ſir, is happineſs ſufficient for me.

Mr Fletcher. You obſerve, my dear children, the unhappy conſequences that reſult from gaming?

Auguſtine. Yes, ſir, and ſhall ſhudder all my life at the idea of them.

Mr. Fletcher. You obſerve too, Auguſtine, with what care and circumſpection one ſhould chuſe a friend?

Auguſtine. Yes, that too, ſir; and am convinced how happy it is for me to have a friend, as I have ſaid already, in my father.

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THE LITTLE NEEDLE-WOMEN.

CHARACTERS.

Mrs. Vincent.
Louisa, Leonora, Sophy, } *her Daughters.*
Clara, *their Friend.*
A poor Woman.
Madge, Joan, } *her Daughters.*

Louisa, with Leonora her ſiſter, are diſcovered working in their room: Sophy ſtands by Louiſa; Clara enters to them.

Clara.

HARD at work! How melancholy you all look! I thought to find you at play upon the ſnow. Come, come, and ſee the trees: they are powdered juſt for all the world like—what d'ye call 'ems.

Louiſa. No: we would not leave our work for any pleaſure that you could name to us.

Clara. Oh, I frequently leave mine for nothing

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Cruikshank fec.

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nothing—But you have not long I hope, to ſit here moping.

Leonora. We were moping, as you call it, all yeſterday; and have been at it again ever ſince the clock ſtruck ſeven.

Clara. My ſtars! I was not up till ten: and in the name of goodneſs! what poſſeſſes you, to work at ſuch a rate?

Louiſa. If you did but know, Clara, for whom we are working, I am ſure you would willingly make one amongſt us.

Clara. Indeed, I would not, Louiſa, were it even for myſelf.

Louiſa. Yourſelf! I ſhould not work, thus late and early, with ſuch ſpirits, for myſelf: nor you, I fancy, Leonora.

Leonora. No, indeed.

Sophy. Gueſs who 'tis for.

Clara. Not for yourſelf, you ſay. It muſt be for your dolls then.—I have gueſſed it! Have I not?

Louiſa, (ſhewing the clothes before them.) Yes, yes; look here, and ſee if theſe will fit a doll.

Clara. How! how! Why, here's a dreſs complete! Which of you is going to be married?

Leonora.

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Leonora. Did you ever hear the like? A jacket to be married in! The girl is crazy, ſhe will never gueſs.

Sophy. Well then, I'll tell you who 'tis for. You know thoſe two poor children, that have nothing on but rags?

Clara. What! that poor woman who has lately loſt her huſband, and cannot get a bit of bread?

Louiſa. Yes, the ſame; it is for her poor children that we are ſo hard at work.

Clara. But you know, your mama and mine both ſent her money.

Louiſa. So they did; but there were debts to pay, and bread to buy. As for clothes——

Leonora. We have taken that upon us.

Clara. But, my dear, why not much rather ſend them ſome of your own old clothes? You would, in that caſe, ſpare yourſelves a deal of trouble.

Louiſa. How you talk! As if our clothes were fit for ſuch ſmall children!

Clara. That I know: they would have been too big, and dragged upon the ground at leaſt a quarter of a yard; but then, their mother might have made them leſs herſelf.

Louiſa.

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Louiſa. She cannot.

Clara. And why not?

Leonora, (*looking ſtedfaſtly upon Clara.*) Becauſe her parents never taught her how to uſe her needle.

Louiſa. Now, as we are rather ready at it, we deſired mama to let us have ſome dimity, and other ſtuff, and to cut us out the neceſſary patterns, promiſing to do the reſt ourſelves.

Leonora. And when the whole is finiſhed, we ſhall viſit the poor woman with it, that her children may be dreſſed a little warmly this cold weather.

Louiſa. Now, my dear, you know the reaſon why we won't go to play upon the ſnow.

Clara, (*with a ſtifled ſigh.*) I'll work a little with you.

Louiſa. Ay, I ſaid ſo.

Leonora. No, no; we have almoſt done.

Louiſa. But, Leonora, why deprive her of ſo great a pleaſure? Look you here, my friend; complete this hem: but you muſt ſew it carefully.

Sophy. If not, my ſiſter will undo it; I am ſure of that.

Clara.

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Clara. What you muſt ſpeak too then, Mrs. Whipperſnapper; juſt as if you knew what is going forward.

Louiſa. How, Clara? I aſſure you, Sophy has aſſiſted us ſurpriſingly. It was ſhe that held the ſtuff while we were cutting it, handed us the pincuſhion, and picked us up our thimbles when they fell. Here, my little dear, take the ſciſſars: Leonora wants them.

Clara. Look, dear Louiſa, have I done this right?

Leonora, (laying hold of the work.) Oh fie! theſe ſtitches are a mile too long, and all awry.

Louiſa. True, they would not hold. But ſtay; I'll give you ſomething elſe.—Here, paſs this bobbin through the jacket collar.

Clara. Ay, ay; I ſhall ſucceed better in this.

Leonora, (looking over her.) See! ſee! how ſhe ſets about!——

Louiſa. Ay, that's all my fault, who did not tell her how it ſhould be done.—See here, my dear Clara,—in this manner.

Clara. I was never taught to do ſo much

as

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as you; and that is the reaſon that I am ſo awkward.

Leonora, (with a ſneer.) Oh, I eaſily believe you.

Louiſa. Do not vex her, ſiſter: ſhe has done her beſt. Hold, let me look a little. How! you have paſſed the bobbin through already. Look ye, Leonora.

Leonora, (pulling the bobbin.) What a pity, it will not ſtir. A mighty clever needle-woman, truly! ſhe does nothing but make work for us.

Clara, (ſorrowfully.) Alas! I know no better.

Louiſa. Do not afflict yourſelf, my dear: you have the beſt of wills; and we have nothing more to boaſt. It ſhall be quickly put to rights. I will do it for you. There; the matter is ſettled. Have *you* finiſhed, Leonora?

Leonora. Only one more ſtitch:—and then, to cut the thread off.—There: now I will make up the parcel. *(She is preparing to do ſo, when Mrs. Vincent enters.)*

Sophy. Here is mama.

Mrs. Vincent. Well, my dears; how do

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you go on? Perhaps you wiſh for my aſſiſtance.

Louiſa. No, mama; we have finiſhed.

Mrs. Vincent. Have you? Let me ſee a little.——Very well, indeed!——What, my Sophy! I am afraid, you thought the time tedious.

Sophy. Oh, not I, mama: I always had ſome little thing to do; aſk my ſiſters.

Louiſa. Yes, indeed: we ſhould not have ended ſo quickly, but for her aſſiſtance. She has never quitted us.

Mrs. Vincent. That was well done. Oh! here is our little neighbour too, Miſs Clara. She muſt have helped you a good deal.

Leonora, (with a ſneer.) She tried; but—

Louiſa. Indeed, we had almoſt finiſhed when ſhe came.

Sophy. She made a ſtitch or two, but ſhe hardly knows more than I: if you had but ſeen, mama, how crooked——

Louiſa. Hold your tongue, Sophy!

Mrs. Vincent. Come; ſince you have been ſo very diligent, I have joyful news to tell you.

Sophy.

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Sophy. What, mama?

Mrs. Vincent. The two poor children and their mother are below. I will ſend you up the little ones, that you may dreſs them, and enjoy the aſtoniſhment of their mother, when ſhe obſerves them ſo much altered.

Louiſa. Dear mama, how you increaſe our pleaſures!

Sophy. Shall I go and fetch them up?

Mrs. Vincent. Yes; follow me; and you ſhall come back with them. In the mean time, I will have a little converſation with the mother, and contrive how ſhe may find out ſome employment for the time to come, and earn a little money. (*She goes out with Sophy.*)

Louiſa. Stay you here with us, Clara: we ſhall want your help; and you muſt have ſome buſineſs at our toilet.

Clara, (*embracing Louiſa.*) Oh! my friend, you have a good heart! I ſee that plainly.

Leonora. I have had a fling or two at you, Clara. Louiſa makes me bluſh, and therefore I entreat your pardon.

Clara, (*embracing Leonora likewiſe.*) Yes, with all my heart.

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Louiſa. I hear the children coming up. (*Sophy enters, bringing in the little girls, Madge and Joan.*)

Sophy, (*whiſpering Louiſa.*) How ſurpriſed they will be. I have not told them any thing about it.

Louiſa. You did well: their pleaſure will be the greater, and ours likewiſe.

Leonora. I ſhall take Madge.

Louiſa. I Joan.

Clara. And Sophy and myſelf will hold the pincuſhions. (*They begin to undreſs them.*)

Madge, (*crying.*) We are cold enough already. Will you take away the little clothes that we have left?

Louiſa. Do not be afraid, poor thing! come hither. You ſhall ſee. A little this way towards the fire.—You are almoſt dead with cold.

Joan. We have not warmed ourſelves to-day.

Madge. Theſe fine new clothes, are they for us?

Joan. Oh bleſs me! what will mother ſay? She will take us for your ſiſters; we ſhall be ſo fine!

Louiſa.

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Louiſa. And you ſhall be our ſiſters for the time to come: ſo never call us any otherwiſe.

Madge. Oh, good young lady, we are your ſervants.

Louiſa. Let me have your arm — The other.—But how ſhort it is! it only reaches to her knees. Well, hair-brains! (*to Leonora.*) this is like you! Do not you ſee that you have handed me the little jacket?

Leonora. So I have indeed: for my part, I was puzzled likewiſe. Madge's feet were covered, and I could not ſee her head. We need but change. There is Joan's.

Louiſa. Let us be as quick as poſſible; and in the mean time, Sophy, do you run and bid mama come up.

Sophy. I am gone. (*She goes out.*)

Louiſa. Ay, now all is right. Turn round.—Once more. Very well: and now, take one another by the hand, and walk acroſs the room before us. (*The children do ſo, and ſurvey themſelves with pleaſure.*)

Clara. How extremely well they fit! they are quite pretty! and there is only one thing wanted. (*To Madge.*) Here is my handkerchief.—Blow hard. (*To Joan.*) Now

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you.—What elſe?—If you had time to dreſs their hair.

Louiſa. No, no, my dear Clara; it is much better hanging looſely. Leonora, what ſay you?

Leonora. A comb, however, to untangle it, would not be much amiſs. I will do that, Louiſa.

Sophy, (runs in jumping.) Here is mama. *(Mrs. Vincent enters with the mother of the children.)*

The Mother. Oh, heavens! what do I ſee? Are theſe my children? O my generous lady! *(falling down at Mrs. Vincent's feet.)*

Mrs. Vincent, (lifting her up.) My good friend, it is not to me that you are indebted for this happineſs. My children wiſhed to make a trial of their ſkill in needle-work, and I permitted them to do ſo. *(Examining the children's jackets.)* Not ſo bad, for a firſt attempt; you might almoſt ſet up for yourſelves.

The Mother, (to Louiſa and her ſiſter.) My charming ladies, let me thank you. God will recompenſe your kindneſs, for I cannot. *(Perceiving Clara at a diſtance.)*

Pardon

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Pardon me, my little lady; I did not ſee you; otherwiſe I ſhould have paid you alſo my acknowledgments.

Clara, (ſighing.) No, no. I had no hand in this day's buſineſs.

Mrs. Vincent. Do not afflict yourſelf upon that account, my dear. By ſighing, you will get nothing; but by ſtedfaſtly reſolving, every thing. However, tell me; do not you think it uſeful and delightful for a young lady, like you, to accuſtom herſelf betimes to work of ſome ſort or other?

Clara. Think ſo? Certainly.

Mrs. Vincent. Of what real pleaſure, even at preſent, are you deprived, by having hitherto neglected an employment ſo adapted to your ſex and age!

The Mother. Dear little lady, learn betimes, if you would be conſidered provident or prudent, to love work; or it will ſoon be too late. I ſhould be very happy now, had any one but given me ſuch a leſſon in my childhood. I could now have got my bread, and been of uſe to thoſe dependent on me for ſupport, inſtead of being burthenſome to worthy people.

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Mrs. Vincent. Indeed, my good friend, it would have been much happier for you, I muſt own, although I ſhould have loſt the pleaſure of aſſiſting you. But you are yet full young enough to make up for loſt time, by application to ſome honeſt labour. Children, you muſt know, I have procured her ſome employment at a weaver's in the neighbourhood; and when ſhe happens to have nothing to do there, ſhe is to come and work here in the garden.

Sophy. I am very glad of that; for I will go too, and help her, if I am able.

Mrs. Vincent. As to Madge and Joan, I mean that my houſe ſhall be their ſchool; and you have both, (*to Louiſa and Leonora,*) deſerved to be their miſtreſſes in work and reading.

Clara. And may I be their aſſiſtant, madam?

Mrs. Vincent. With all my heart, if your mama conſents; in which caſe, you and Sophy ſhall endeavour to outdo each other. (*To the poor woman.*) My good friend, are you contented that matters ſhould be as I have ſettled?

The

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The Mother. Contented? My benevolent and generous lady, I ſhall owe you all my happineſs, and that, too, of my deſtitute and friendleſs children. Dear good angels, give God thanks, for having bleſſed you with ſo careful a mama, who trains you up thus betimes to diligence. You ſee, it is the ſource of comfort to yourſelves and to us too.

THE SELF-CORRECTED LIAR.

LITTLE Griffith was now ſix years old, and had never yet told a falſity. He never had committed any fault, and therefore had no need to hide the truth. When any accident befel him, as to break a pane of glaſs, or ſpot his cloaths, he went immediately and told his father, who would be always ſo good as to forgive him, with a caution that in future he ſhould be more careful.

Griffith had a couſin, but a very naughty boy, whoſe name was Robert. Robert

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came one day to see him; and Griffith, by way of shewing his attention to his visitor, made proposals for a game at drafts. His cousin eagerly accepted the proposal, on condition that they should play for something. Griffith for a little time refused, but in the end was wrought upon by Robert, and in hardly more than thirty minutes, all the money which he had been laying up many weeks from his allowance was completely gone. Affected with his loss, poor Griffith got into a corner, and began to cry, while Robert fell a laughing, and went home in triumph with his spoil.

It was not long before poor Griffith's father, who had been from home, returned. He loved the child, and therefore sent to see him in the parlour. But what ails you? said he. And what has happened? Sure you have been crying?

Griffith. Yes, papa, because my cousin has been here, and made me play with him at drafts.

The Father. And what of that? I see no harm done yet; for drafts are a diversion that I have given you leave to take. But possibly you played for money?

Griffith.

Griffith. O! no, no, papa.

The Father. Then why do you cry?

Griffith. Becauſe I wiſhed to ſhew my couſin how much money I had ſaved to buy myſelf a book. Now I had hid it all behind the great ſtone poſt without, and when I put my hand into the hole, it was gone. Some perſon, paſſing by the gate, has ſtolen it.

Griffith's father, ſome how or another, fancied this recital to be falſe: but did not mention his ſuſpicions then. He went that moment to his brother's, and as ſoon as he ſaw little Robert, he forced a ſmile, and began in this manner:

Well, my child, you have been lucky, have not you, to-day?

Oh! yes, ſaid Robert, very lucky, ſir!

And what did you win?

A ſhilling, ſaid the nephew.

What, ſo much? And did he pay you, Robert?

Doubtleſs, uncle. I have it in my pocket.

Notwithſtanding Griffith had deſerved a grievous puniſhment, his father thought it not amiſs to pardon this, as being his firſt

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falſehood; and therefore only told him, with a ſcornful tone of voice, that ſince he knew that he had a liar in his houſe, he would tell all the ſervants never to believe him, whatſoever he ſhould ſay.

Some few days after, Griffith went in turn to viſit Robert, and pulled out a handſome pencil-caſe which his ſiſter had beſtowed on him at Chriſtmas. Robert wiſhed to have it, and in exchange would have been glad to give him every one of his playthings, his ball, his top, and rackets; but as Griffith, he obſerved, would not part with it, he began to play the bully, put his arms akimbo, and advancing towards him, ſaid, "The pencil-caſe is mine: I loſt it at your houſe, or elſe you ſtole it." Griffith, to no purpoſe, earneſtly proteſted that it was his ſiſter's preſent. Robert quickly let him ſee that he meant to force it from him; and as Griffith graſped it with both hands, he cloſed upon him, threw him down, got over him, and with his double fiſt ſo pomelled Griffith in the face that he was forced to yield the caſe.

Poor Griffith, being treated in this manner, poſted home, his noſe all over blood,

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and half his hair pulled off.—" Papa, papa, (ſaid he, as ſoon as he was come within his father's hearing,) look how I have been uſed! The naughty Robert has this moment robbed me of my pencil-caſe, and handled me as you ſee."

But far from pitying him, his father anſwered, " Go, you liar; you have loſt your pencil-caſe at drafts, and to deceive me, ſmeared your noſe with mulberry-juice, and put your hair into diſorder." Griffith ſolemnly proteſted, to no purpoſe, that he ſpoke only the truth. " I cannot credit (ſaid the father) one who has already proved himſelf a liar."

Griffith, quite confounded, went away into his chamber, and bewailed moſt bitterly the conſequences of his firſt untruth. Next day he begged permiſſion to appear before his father, and implored forgiveneſs. " I acknowledge (ſaid he) how wicked I have been in ſeeking to deceive you with a falſehood once: but, dear papa, let me entreat you to give up your reſolutions of believing me no longer when I even ſpeak the truth!

His

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His father told me the other day that from that moment Griffith had not let the leaſt untruth eſcape him, and that therefore he had recompenced his ſon's veracity by truſting him implicitly. He never looked for proteſtations from him: it was ſufficient Griffith barely told him any thing, that he ſhould take it for as great a certainty as if himſelf had ſeen it.

What a ſatisfaction this, to be experienced by a tender father, and a ſon ſo worthy of him!

RECEIPT TO BE ALWAYS PLEASED.

I Should be very glad to play, mama, all day, ſaid Laura.

Mrs. Delwin. What, *all* day?

Laura. Oh! yes, mama.

Mrs. Delwin. I ſhall be very glad to give you any pleaſure in my power, my little Laura; but I fear, you will very ſoon be tired.

Laura.

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Laura. Of playing! Never. You ſhall ſee that, mama.

And ſaying ſo, the little Laura ran to fetch her playthings. She had got them all together, but was quite alone: for both her ſiſters were that day to be employed with different maſters, till the afternoon.

At firſt, ſhe played as ſhe thought proper, and was very happy for an hour or thereabouts; but, by degrees, the pleaſure which ſhe enjoyed began to loſe a little of its power to pleaſe her.

She had now handled her playthings twenty times, or oftener, and could tell no longer what to do. Her favourite doll was grown quite troubleſome and tedious to her.

She deſired her dear mama to ſhew her ſome new method of diverſion, and to play with her; but unfortunately her mama had very preſſing buſineſs, and could not attend to her, however ſhe might wiſh to do ſo.

Laura, after this, ſat moping in a corner, till her ſiſters had quite finiſhed with their maſters, and were now about to take a little recreation. She ran to them in a melancholy

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melancholy mood, which was as much as mentioning how long their time of ſtudy had ſeemed to her, and with what impatience ſhe had wiſhed to ſee them.

They propoſed immediately ſuch games as they ſuppoſed moſt entertaining, for they loved her greatly: but, alas! all their ſolicitude was uſeleſs. Laura could not but complain that every game which they mentioned had already tired her; nay, in her impatience, ſhe even ventured to accuſe them of conſpiring with each other to afford her ſuch diverſion only as they knew would not amuſe her. Upon which Miſs Amelia, her eldeſt ſiſter, an extremely ſenſible young lady of ten years old, took Laura by the hand, and with a ſmile began as follows:

Look at us, dear Laura, and I will tell you which perſon in the room occaſions your diſſatisfaction.

Laura. And who is it, ſiſter? For my part, I don't know.

Amelia. The reaſon is, you do not look at yourſelf. Yes, Laura, you yourſelf occaſion your diſſatisfaction; for you ſee theſe games amuſe *us* ſtill, though we have played them over, you may eaſily imagine, before

you

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you were born: but then we have been both at work, and therefore are they in a manner new to us. If you, by previous ſtudy and attention, had obtained an appetite for pleaſure, you would certainly have been pleaſed as eaſily as we are.

Little Laura, who, however young ſhe was, by no means wanted underſtanding, was ſo ſtruck with theſe remarks, as to diſcern that every one who would be happy ſhould take care to mix improving exerciſe with pleaſing recreation. And indeed, I know not whether, after ſuch experience gained, the menace of a whole day's pleaſure would not have more terrified her than that of a whole day's labour.

THE TULIPS.

LUCETTA had ſeen for two ſummers ſucceſſively a bed of tulips in her father's garden, which were ſtreaked with the moſt beautiful colours.

Like the fluttering butterfly, ſhe often roved

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roved from flower to flower, being ſtruck merely with their beauty, but never reflecting to what they owed their origin.

Laſt Autumn, ſhe ſaw her father amuſe himſelf with digging up the bed and planting tulip roots. Ah! papa, cried ſhe in a whimpering tone, what are you doing? Will you ſpoil all our fine tulip-bed ſo, and inſtead of thoſe fine flowers that grew there, put naſty onions in it for the kitchen?

Her father anſwered her, that he knew what he was about, and he was going to tell her that from thoſe onions would come forth new tulips the following year; but Lucetta interrupted him by her complaints, and would liſten to nothing.

When her father ſaw that he could not make her underſtand reaſon, he left her to pacify herſelf, and continued his work while ſhe retired ſobbing.

During the Winter, as often as the converſation turned upon flowers, Lucetta ſighed, and thought within herſelf how great a pity it was that her father had deſtroyed the fineſt ornament of the garden. Winter finiſhed its courſe, and Spring came

next

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next to sweep the snow and ice off the ground.

Lucetta had not entered the garden yet. Indeed it would have been difficult to prevail on her to go in, as it was deprived of her favourite flower. One day, however, she entered without thinking. But what were her transports of surprise and joy, when she saw the tulip-bed still more beautiful than the preceding year! She stood still at first, motionless and silent with admiration: at length she threw herself into her father's arms, crying, Ah! dear papa, I thank you for plucking up those nasty onions, and for putting in their place those sweet flowers that I am so fond of.

You owe me no thanks, answered her father, for these sweet flowers that you are so fond of sprung from nothing else but my nasty onions.

The obstinate Lucetta would not believe a word of it; upon which her father pulled up carefully one of the finest tulips, together with the bulbous root (resembling an onion) from which the stalk grew, and presented it to her.

Lucetta quite confounded, asked pardon for

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for having been so unreasonable. I pardon you, my dear child, with all my heart, replied her father, provided you acknowledge how easy it is for children to deceive themselves, when they attempt to judge, from their ignorance, of the actions of people who have had experience.

Oh! yes, papa, answered Lucetta, I am convinced of that, and therefore for the future shall distrust my own eyes; and whenever I shall be tempted to suppose that I know more of the matter than other people, I will think of the Tulips and the Onions.

I am very glad, my dear little friends, that I had it in my power to tell you this story; for you will presently see what happened to another child who had never heard it.

THE STRAWBERRIES AND CURRANTS.

ALLAN had frequently heard his father say, that children were without the least degree of knowledge of what was proper

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proper for them; and that all the wiſdom which they could poſſibly prove themſelves to poſſeſs, lay in following the advice of people older than themſelves. And yet he never had ſincerely wiſhed to underſtand this doctrine, or perhaps, to ſpeak as favourably as the matter will allow, had forgot it.

His indulgent father had allotted him, and Proſpero, his brother, a convenient piece of ground, that each might have a little garden, and diſplay his induſtry and knowledge in the cultivation of it. And not only this, but they had leave to ſow whatever ſeed they thought proper, or to take any tree, or root, already growing in their father's garden, and tranſplant it.

Proſperor emembering the inſtruction of his father, went to have a little converſation on this ſubject with Ralph the gardener, and began thus: Pray tell me what I ought to ſow at preſent in my garden, and how to ſet about my work.

The gardener gave him ſeveral roots and ſeeds adapted to the ſeaſon. Proſpero that moment ran and put them in the ground, and

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and Ralph was so kind as to assist him in the work, and to give him some instruction.

But Allan, seeing Prospero's docility, shrugged up his shoulders. Ralph, not observing this contemptuous action, asked if he should give him some assistance and instruction likewise?

Yes, replied Allan; I have great occasion, to be sure, for your assistance and instruction, particularly the last!

On this, he went into his father's garden; and selecting for his own, a quantity of flowers, transplanted them immediately. The gardener let him do as he thought fit.

Next morning, when Allan visited his garden, all the flowers which he had so lately planted hung their heads like mourners at a funeral, and, as he saw, were dying. He transplanted others from his father's garden, which the morning after he observed, with much vexation, were exactly in the same condition.

He was very soon disgusted with this sort of work. It was paying very dear, we must acknowledge, for the pleasure of possessing a few flowers. Of course he gave it

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it up, and it was not long before his piece of ground was overrun with weeds and thiſtles.

Towards the middle of the Spring, as he was looking at his brother's garden, he ſaw ſomething red ſuſpended very near the ground, which, on examination, he diſcerned to be ſtrawberries, and found to have an exquiſite degree of flavour.

Ah, ſaid he, if I had planted ſtrawberries in my garden!

Some time after, likewiſe, he ſaw certain little berries of a milk white colour, that hung down in cluſters from the branches of a buſh; upon examination, they were currants, which to look at only was a banquet.

Ah, ſaid he again, if I had planted currants in my garden!

Eat as many as you like, ſaid Proſpero, as if they were your own.

It depended on yourſelf, and no one elſe, remarked the gardener, to have had as good; ſo never for the future treat with ſcorn the aſſiſtance and inſtruction which any one may offer you, who is poſſeſſed of greater knowledge and experience than yourſelf.

OBLI-

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OBLIGINGNESS AND COMPLAISANCE.

EMILIA, Victoria, Juliet, and Sophia, had a governeſs who loved them with the fondneſs of a mother. This governeſs was called Mademoiſelle Beaufoy.

Her greateſt wiſh was, that her pupils ſhould be virtuous in order to be happy; that a friendſhip for each other ſhould increaſe the pleaſures of their childhood; and that they ſhould taſte thoſe pleaſures without diminution or anxiety.

A kind indulgence, and exact degree of juſtice towards them, were the conſtant motives of her conduct, whether ſhe had any thing to pardon, to reward, or puniſh in them.

She enjoyed, with infinite delight, the pleaſing fruits of her inſtruction and example.

The four little girls began to be the happieſt children upon earth. They told each other of their faults, forgave each other, ſhared together of each other's joys, and could not live without each other.

Alas!

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Alas! by what fatality do children poiſon the ſource of their own enjoyments, at the very moment when they begin to taſte its charms; and how great is their happineſs when they are placed under the eye of a perſon endowed with equal prudence and tenderneſs.

It happened, that Mademoiſelle Beaufoy was forced to leave her pupils for a time, as certain family concerns obliged her to viſit France. She left them with reluctance, made a ſacrifice of ſome advantages to the deſire of quickly ſettling her affairs, and hardly had a month expired when ſhe returned in ſafety to her little flock.

They all received her with the greateſt ſigns of joy: but, alas! what an unhappy alteration did ſhe very ſoon perceive in theſe poor little children!

If, as frequently it happened, any one among them aſked the ſlighteſt favour of another, the latter ill-naturedly refuſed it, and hence followed diſcontent and quarrels:—the uncommon gaiety that hitherto had been remarkable in all their little ſports, and made their work itſelf delightful, was now changed to peeviſhneſs and

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melancholy; and instead of those expressions dictated by peace and friendship, which were before heard in all their conversations, nothing now prevailed among them but incessant bickerings. Did either wish to take an hour's diversion in the garden? her sisters were sure to assign some reason for remaining in their chamber. And, in short, it was enough that any thing should meet the wish of one among them to displease the others.

It particularly chanced one day, that not contented to deny each other every sort of friendship and obligingness, they mutually distressed each other with reproaches. Mademoiselle Beaufoy, who sat as a witness of this scene, was so affected by it as even to shed tears.

She could not speak a word; and pensively withdrew into her chamber, that she might the better think upon the means of rendering back to these unhappy little ones the pleasures of their former friendship and reciprocal attachment, which they had lost.

She was still employed in this afflicting task, when all the four young ladies entered her

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her apartment, with a peeviſh and uneaſy look, complaining that they could be no longer happy in each other's company. There was not one of them but charged the reſt with cauſing it; and all together earneſtly deſired their governeſs to reſtore them, if poſſible, to their loſt happineſs.

The governeſs received them in a very ſerious manner, ſaying, I obſerve, my children, you obſtruct each other in your pleaſures; therefore, that this circumſtance may never come to paſs again, let each take up her corner in this very room, if ſhe thinks proper, and divert herſelf in any way that ſhe likes, but ſo as not to interfere with either of her ſiſters. You may have recourſe to this new mode of recreation inſtantly, as you have leave to play till night; but each (remember) in her corner, as I ſaid juſt now.

The little girls were charmed with this propoſal, took their places, and began to play.

Sophia entered into converſation with her doll, or rather told her many little ſtories; but her doll could not reply, and had no ſtories in her turn to tell. It was in vain

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to look for any entertainment from her ſiſters; they were playing, each aſunder, in their corners.

Juliet took her battledore and ſhuttlecock, yet none applauded her dexterity; beſides, ſhe would gladly have ſtruck it acroſs the room, but in that caſe there was nobody to ſend it back. It was in vain to hope ſuch ſervice from her ſiſters; they were playing, each aſunder, in their corners.

Emilia could have wiſhed to paſs the time that now hung heavy on her at a game of which ſhe was very fond, *hunt the ſlipper:* but, alas! who was there to paſs the ſlipper from hand to hand? It was in vain to aſk her ſiſters; they were playing, each aſunder, in their corners.

And Victoria, who was very ſkilful as a little houſewife, thought how ſhe might give her friends an entertainment, and of courſe ſend out for many things to market. But who was to receive her orders? It was in vain to pitch upon her ſiſters; they were playing, each aſunder, in their corners.

It was juſt the ſame with every other play. All of them ſuppoſed that it would be

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be compromiſing matters to approach each other, and therefore they diſdainfully continued in their ſolitude. At length the day concluded. They returned again to Mademoiſelle Beaufoy, and begged her to ſhew them a better ſort of amuſement than that which ſhe had already recommended.

I can only think of one, my children, anſwered ſhe, which you yourſelves knew very well formerly, but which it ſeems you have now forgotten. Yet, if you wiſh to put it once more into practice, I can eaſily remind you of it.

Oh! we wiſh to recollect it with all our hearts, replied they; and ſtood all attention to ſeize with ardour the firſt word that their governeſs ſhould utter.

It is, anſwered ſhe, that reciprocal obligingneſs, that mutual friendſhip, which ſiſters owe to each other. O, my deareſt little friends! how miſerable have you contrived to make yourſelves and me too, ſince you loſt it!

She ſtopped ſhort when ſhe had uttered theſe few words, which yet were interrupted frequently by ſighs, while tears of tenderneſs ran down her cheeks.

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The little girls appeared aſtoniſhed and ſtruck dumb with ſorrow and confuſion in her preſence. She held out her arms; they ruſhed at once affectionately towards her, and ſincerely promiſed that they would love each other for the future, and agree as they had done before ſhe left them.

From that moment they betrayed no ſigns of peeviſhneſs to trouble their harmonious intercourſe. Inſtead of bickerings and diſcontent amongſt them, nothing now was known but mutual condeſcenſions which delighted all who had the opportunity of being with them.

They preſerve this amiable character at preſent in the world among their friends, of whom they are acknowledged to be the delight and ornament.

THE

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THE LINNET's NEST.

MAMA, mama, cried out little Sam, one evening, running out of breath into the parlour; ſee, ſee, what I have here in my hat.

Mrs. Baxter. Ha, ha! a linnet! Where did you get it?

Sam. I happened to find a neſt in the morning, as I paſſed along the white-thorn hedge, below the fiſh-pond. And waiting till the evening, I crept along the hedge as ſoftly as I could, and ſlap! before the bird could be aware of me, caught her by the wings.

Mrs. Baxter. Was ſhe by herſelf, then, in the neſt?

Sam. No, no; the little ones were in it too. But they are ſo little yet that they have not got their feathers. Oh! they can't eſcape me!

Mrs. Baxter. And what do you intend to do with this linnet?

Sam. Put it in a cage, mama.

Mrs. Baxter. And with the young ones?

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Sam. Oh! I'll take the young ones too, and rear them. I will run now and fetch them.

Mrs. Baxter. I am ſorry, Sam; but you will not have time to get them.

Sam. Oh! it is not far off. Don't you know the Windſor pear-tree? Well, it is cloſe by that. I have taken care to mark the place.

Mrs. Baxter. But that is not the matter. What I mean is, that our neighbour, Juſtice Sharp, has ſent to take you up. The conſtables are very likely come, and at the door.

Sam. The conſtables! to take me up?

Mrs. Baxter. Yes, yes; to take you up! The juſtice has your father in cuſtody already; and the conſtables who took him, told us that they would ſoon come back for you, with Kitty, Bell, and Sally, and then carry you all four to priſon.

Sam. Oh! dear me! And what does he deſign to do with us?

Mrs. Baxter. You will be ſhut up in a little room, and not have permiſſion to come out a moment.

Sam. Oh! the wicked juſtice!

Mrs.

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Mrs Baxter. However, he will not do you any harm. They will give you, every day, good things to eat and drink. You will have nothing to complain of but your loſs of freedom, and the pleaſure of ſeeing me. (*Sam begins to cry.*) Well, what is the matter with you? Is confinement ſuch a great misfortune, if they give you every thing that you want? (*Sam cannot ſpeak for ſobbing.*) The juſtice treats your father, ſiſters, and yourſelf, as you would treat the linnet and its young. You cannot call him wicked, therefore, as you do, without confeſſing that you are ſo yourſelf.

Sam, (ſobbing.) Oho! I will let the linnet fly, mama, this inſtant. (*He opens his hat, and the bird flies out at the window.*)

Mrs. Baxter, (*taking him into her arms.*) Be of comfort, my dear Sam! for I only meant to give you ſome inſtruction by this little ſtory of the juſtice: neither will your father, or your ſiſters, or yourſelf, be ſent to priſon. All I wiſhed was to convince you how wicked it would be to ſhut up the poor little bird. As much as you appeared afflicted, when I told you that they would

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take you up, ſo much the little bird *was* certainly when you deprived her of her liberty. Conceive how much the cock would have lamented to be parted from the hen, the young ones from their mother, and the mother from her young ones. This I am ſure you did not think of, otherwiſe you never would have taken it. Tell me, would you?

Sam. Never, dear mama; I did not once think of all this.

Mrs. Baxter. Well, think of it for the future, and forget not that birds, as well as every other creature, were created to enjoy their liberty, and that it would be cruel to fill up with ſorrow that ſhort period of exiſtence which God had granted them; and, to remember this the better, you ſhould get by heart a little piece of poetry that your friend has written.

Sam. What! the Children's Friend? Oh! pray repeat it to me.

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THE LINNETS.

I HOLD it faſt, this linnet's neſt,
With one, two, three, four young ones in it:
Long did I watch you, without reſt,
But pris'ners made you in a minute.

Cry, little rebels, as you pleaſe,
And flap your wings; but vain you'll find it!
You cannot get away with eaſe;
So ſtay with me, and never mind it.

But, don't I hear their mother's cries
Deplore their durance that has bound them?
Yes; and their father likewiſe flies,
Sadly complaining, round and round them.

And ſhall I cauſe them ſo much pain
Who us'd to go laſt ſpring, and hear them
From yon broad oak pour down their ſtrain,
While the whole grove was muſic near them?

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Alas! if from my mother I
Should thus with violence be parted,
I know, with ſorrow ſhe would die,
Or, if ſhe liv'd, live broken-hearted.

Should I then, cruel ſpoiler! tear,
Thoſe innocents from her who bore them?
No: I'll not doom you to deſpair!
Take back your young, I here reſtore them.

Teach them, in ſome o'er-arching glade,
Round you, from morn till night to hover,
Learning to harmonize the ſhade,
Throat anſwering throat, and lover lover.

So will I come and ſit, next year,
With the firſt dawn, till day's deſcending,
Under the oak, and feaſt my ear
While their ſoft notes are ſweetly blending.

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THE SPIRIT OF CONTRADICTION.

Mrs. Cranfield, Helen, her daughter.

Helen. NO, mama: I had much rather finiſh this purſe.

Mrs. Cranfield. But then, Helen, Caroline would certainly be a great deal better pleaſed with the work-bag. Do not you recollect, ſhe ſeemed delighted when you ſhowed her yours? and the bag you have above ſtairs is made exactly like it.

Helen. Notwithſtanding that, mama, I know ſhe would like the purſe a great deal better.

Mrs. Cranfield. Be it ſo; but will the purſe be finiſhed? There are ſtill at leaſt a dozen rows to do; whereas, the work-bag only wants a ribband to complete it. Sure you would not pay a viſit to your couſin, on her birth-day, and go there without ſome preſent for her?

Helen. O, mama, you know, I ſhould not like to do ſo; but believe me, you ſhall ſee the purſe very ſoon finiſhed.

Mrs. Cranfield. Think before you come

to

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to any reſolution. Your father, I ſuppoſe you know, ſets out at four o'clock exactly, and if any one among you has not finiſhed what ſhe had to do, ſhe will not go with him.

Helen. He ſets out at five o'clock, mama, not four.

Mrs. Cranfield. Helen, will you never be rid of this ſhocking trick? Will you always be determined to aſſert the abſolute reverſe of every thing that you hear?

Helen. But if I am ſure that papa ſets out at five, and not before?

Mrs. Cranfield. Well, well, Helen; it will very ſoon be ſeen which is in the right. But I adviſe you, as a friend, to be prepared againſt the hour that *I* mention.

Helen. O, if that be all, mama, you may be ſure to find me ready, even at four: for look ye, it is, as one may ſay, quite finiſhed. I ſhould gain a quarter of an hour beſide, were I to run and work below there, in the garden.

Mrs. Cranfield. Why ſo, pray?

Helen. Becauſe it is ſo much lighter there.

Mrs. Cranfield. But ſure, you will loſe a deal

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deal of time in going thither and returning?

Helen. O! do not fear but I ſhall recover it again. My work will go on ten times the better for it.

Mrs. Cranfield. As you pleaſe, Helen; but remember, I have forewarned you what may be the caſe.

Helen. I will take the conſequence upon myſelf, and run as faſt as poſſible.

In fact, ſhe did run thither very faſt; ſo faſt that ſhe arrived quite out of breath. She wanted more than half a dozen minutes to recover; and at laſt, when ſhe was ſet at work, her hands were in a tremble, owing to her flurry; ſo that ſhe frequently took up one ſtitch for another. In the end, when ſhe was quite recovered, it muſt be owned, ſhe puſhed her work on very faſt. And yet, in ſpite of all her diligence, it ſeemed to grow beneath her fingers. Mrs. Cranfield, who was really uneaſy, came to find her.

Mrs. Cranfield. Well, Helen, how goes buſineſs forward? Have you finiſhed?

Helen. No, not yet, mama; nor is it five o'clock yet.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Cranfield. Right, Helen; but it is four: the clock has juſt ſtruck.

Helen. Not ſtruck, mama. I have been liſtening; ſo I am ſure of that.

Mrs. Cranfield. I do not know how it came about then that I heard it; and your father muſt have heard it likewiſe, for you will find that he is ſetting out.

Helen. O! now, I am ſure, you are joking: that can never be.

Mrs. Cranfield. However, Dick has put the horſes to, and here are your brother and your ſiſters coming. They are ready.

Helen. O, dear me! You do not ſay ſo, mama!

The Brother, (*coming forward.*) Where are you, Helen? We are waiting now for none but you.

Helen. One moment, brother.

The Brother. Four o'clock has ſtruck, and you remember, papa at dinner told us that he ſhould go preciſely to a minute; having an appointment here, at half paſt five.

Mrs. Cranfield. Well now, Helen, you remember what I told you.

Helen. But, mama——

(*Helen's*

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(*Helen's three ſiſters enter, crying out,*) Helen! come, come, come!

Helen, (*vexed.*) Do not be in a hurry children.

The Brother. How, Helen, have you not done your purſe yet? See here the little landſcape that I ſhall give my couſin.

Firſt Siſter. And this pot of flowers, which will be my preſent.

Second Siſter. And this houſewife of my making for her.

Third Siſter. And theſe garters that I have knit her.—But here comes papa.

Mr. Cranfield, (*coming in.*) Well, we are ſetting out. You know, Helen, I never make any one wait for me, therefore I never ſtay for others. If you are ready, come along; but if not, remain behind.

Helen. My purſe is not done yet: I have but two ſhort rows to finiſh.

Mr. Cranfield. (*beckoning the other children to follow.*) Well, good bye, Helen: I will give your love to Caroline, and ſay that you wiſh her well and happy, on her birthday. (*They go out.*)

Helen, (*crying.*) They are ſetting out, and I muſt ſtay at home quite melancholy! I that

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that waited with ſo much impatience for this day! Caroline will have a preſent from every one of them, and I, the eldeſt, am not of the party! What will ſhe think of me?

Mrs. Cranfield. In reality, the caſe is pitiable, I muſt own; and more particularly ſo, as it depended on yourſelf alone, to ſhun this mortifying ſituation. I forewarned you what would be the caſe, in proper time; and if, inſtead of being obſtinately bent to go on with your purſe, you had but put a ribband to your work-bag; if you had not loſt ſo many minutes as you did in running hither; if you had not taken it into your head, from the firſt, that your father was not to ſet out till five, you would have ſaved yourſelf all this vexation. The misfortune is now come, and you have only to ſupport it, as you ought, with patience.

Helen. But my aunt and uncle, what will they think of me? They will imagine that I am in diſgrace, or elſe that I do not love my couſin.

Mrs. Cranfield. You muſt own, Helen, they will have ſome reaſon to ſuſpect as much.

Helen.

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Helen. Ah, dear mama! inſtead of leſſening, you increaſe my ſorrow!

Mrs. Cranfield. No, Helen, I am no leſs ſorrowful than you: but then, if you think proper, I can end your ſorrow.

Helen. Oh now, you are quite good! Yes, yes; I will make an end as ſoon as poſſible, and then we two will take the purſe. My uncle, aunt, and couſin too, will be agreeably ſurpriſed, and ſee that my coming ſo late was not my fault. I ſuppoſe then, you will ſend out to fetch a coach, and in the mean time I ſhall finiſh.

Mrs. Cranfield. No, Helen, that would be to diſobey your father, and deprive you of the benefit accruing from an uſeful leſſon. You ſhall not, at leaſt to-day, go ſee your couſin; but may have it in your power to be as happy as you would have been by going. I have a certain method to propoſe to you for that purpoſe.

Helen. And what is it, pray, mama?

Mrs. Cranfield. To form, from this time forward, a determined reſolution not to ſettle matters juſt as you yourſelf think proper; to renounce particularly that intolerable trick that you have of contradict-

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ing everlaſtingly whatever you hear ſaid; and to rid yourſelf of the vile habit of oppoſing your own ridiculous ideas to the counſels of ſuch people as you know to be wiſer than yourſelf. I am perſuaded, you have ſufficient courage to take up any reſolution, and to ſupport it.

Helen. Yes, indeed, mama, I will, I will do ſo.

Mrs. Cranfield. I expected nothing leſs from you, Helen; and if during the remainder of the week I ſee you perſevere in your laudable reſolution, we will go next Saturday and ſee your couſin. We ſhall then carry her the purſe and the work-bag alſo, which will make her think that you have delayed your preſent with a view of complimenting her with ſomething worthier of herſelf, and more expreſſive of your generoſity.

Helen, (*embracing her mama.*) Oh! dear mama, once more you make me happy!

Mrs. Cranfield. You, Helen, make me no leſs happy. Poſſibly this very moment you are laying the foundation of your whole future happineſs.

THE

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THE DESERTER.

A DRAMA, in THREE ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

MOORHOUSE, -	*a Publican.*
GRACE, -	*his Wife.*
GEORGE *their Son,*	*a Corporal.*
TRUNNION, -	*his Comrade.*
THOMAS, -	*Moorhouſe's Brother.*
STEWARD.	
CAPTAIN.	
SERJEANT.	

During the two firſt acts, the ſcene is laid in the Publican's houſe; but changes to a priſon in the laſt.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Moorhouſe, (entering,) Grace, (ſpinning with a diſtaff and ſpindle.)

Moorhouſe. HERE is a ſoldier coming, Grace.

Grace, (letting fall her ſpindle.) A ſoldier! What are we to do? Our trade gone, and a ſoldier quartered on us!

Moorhouſe.

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Moorhouſe. After all, perhaps, though it is not likely that he ſhould help us, he will have more compaſſion on our poverty than richer folks. A ſoldier's character, my dear, is much miſrepreſented: he has far more conſcience than a ſteward, who is hardened to oppreſs the poor by dint of habit, while a ſoldier is often thinking of another life, as he has death before him often.

SCENE II.

Moorhouſe, Grace, Trunnion.

Trunnion. Save you! I am come to be your gueſt. See, here is the billet: it is for two. Another is on the road.

Moorhouſe. We would entertain you, ſoldier, with all our hearts, but we really have not the means. Though we keep a public-houſe, yet trade is ſo dead that we cannot renew our licence, which is almoſt out. We ſignified as much to Juſtice Parſons in the neighbourhood, and begged that no ſoldiers might be ſent us; but he anſwered, till our licence was expired we muſt be looked upon as publicans, and take the conſequence. Indeed, we have hardly now

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a ſingle cuſtomer: the houſe is deſerted, and our ſtock of liquor out to the very laſt drop.

Trunnion. But, for heaven's ſake, my good people, tell me how you live without a bit of fire?

Grace. When one has got no fuel, and no money to buy any—

Trunnion. For my part, I muſt have ſome to warm me, and a bit of dinner likewiſe. Have you any thing to give me?

Grace. Nothing; not ſo much as bread. We live from hand to mouth; and when we get one meal, cannot tell when we ſhall have another. If you do not believe me, take a look about the houſe, and ſee if you diſcover any thing but poverty within it.

Trunnion. No, no; I believe and pity you. I have a little money in my pocket, which I cannot do better than ſhare with you. My good friend, here is a ſhilling and ſome halfpence: go, buy us ſomething good to eat; you ſhall take a bit along with us, but firſt, a little wood.

Moorhouſe. You are very kind; I will run immediately. (*He goes out.*)

SCENE

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SCENE III.

Trunnion, Grace.

Trunnion. And in the mean time, with your leave, good mother, I will examine how my arms are.

Grace. With my leave, good friend? Do what you pleaſe; you are welcome.—(*Aſide.*) My huſband is right; ſoldiers are much better chriſtians than too many gentlefolks.—(*To Trunnion.*) My ſon is a ſoldier likewiſe.

Trunnion. In what regiment?

Grace. Colonel Sheffield's.

Trunnion. What is his name then?

Grace. George Moorhouſe.——Heaven knows if he be ſtill alive. I have not heard about him for theſe four years.

Trunnion. Do not you be uneaſy, my good woman, he is ſtill living.

Grace. Dear ſir, do you know him then?

Trunnion, (*embarraſſed.*) I can't tell that; but I ſuppoſe he is living, as he came of ſuch good folks.

Grace. Ah, that is no reaſon.

Trunnion.

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Trunnion. But I wiſh your huſband were returned. If I had but the wood, I would make a fire. My comrade is rather boiſterous, and will certainly be angry if he does not find things ready when he comes.

Grace. Oh! you will excuſe us. A good word from you will pacify him.

Trunnion. Words will not do with him, and beſides he is a corporal. I muſt not ſpeak to him as I pleaſe.

SCENE IV.

Trunnion, Grace, Moorhouſe.

Moorhouſe, (*throwing down a faggot.*) Here is ſome wood, and a nice bit of meat; and turnips that a gardener gave me. I have brought you back a little change too.

Trunnion. Keep that to buy us ſome ſmall beer. I thought to have had a pint of porter; but my family is increaſed, and ſo my liquor muſt be weaker.

Grace. Come, my dear, open the faggot, and I will make a fire: the gentleman ſays that his comrade is rather haſty.

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Trunnion. Yes, and being a non-commiſſioned officer beſides, he will expect things to be as they ſhould. He is giving orders in the company, otherwiſe he would have been here before now. Ah! here he comes.

SCENE V.

Trunnion, Grace, Moorhouſe, George.

George. Well, is dinner ready? Make haſte, good people.

Moorhouſe. It is not our fault, good ſir, that matters are no forwarder. Your comrade will inform you ſo.

Trunnion, (in a whiſper to George.) Come, finiſh this child's play, and tell them who you are *(To Grace.)* Conſider this young man, good mother.

George. Do not you recollect me?

Grace, (after having looked at George with attention.) Heavens! can it be George?

George. Yes, yes, it is, dear mother. Oh, what pleaſure to behold you after ſuch long abſence.

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Moorhouſe. Is it poſſible? my ſon! Oh, welcome dear, dear boy, a thouſand times!

Grace, (*embracing him.*) I ſee you then once more before I die? Heaven be praiſed!

Moorhouſe. And how have you contrived to live? ſo many, my dear ſon, are dead, but you in ſafety!

George. Yes, and yet I have never been deficient in my duty. I owe it certainly to your prayers, that I have eſcaped ſafe and ſound from all dangers. I find I am quartered on you: Are you ſorry for it?

Moorhouſe. Can you aſk if we are ſorry! ſince the day you left us, we have never been ſo happy.

Grace, (*whiſpering Trunnion.*) My good friend, you told me ſomething of a corporal, I think?

Trunnion. Why, George is a corporal. Don't you ſee it?

Moorhouſe. Then you are promoted! but how came that about? You could not read.

George. My captain had me taught.

Moorhouſe. Oh, what a charming man this captain muſt be!

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Grace. Let them tell us now that ſoldiers are not ſpecial people!

Trunnion. I will anſwer for it, George will ſoon be higher than a corporal. (*To George.*) But how came you not to tell me, when you ſaw the billet, that you were quartered on your father?

George. Comrade, I was ſo full of joy that I could not ſpeak.

Grace. How long are you to ſtay with us?

George. Two days. We halt here.

Moorhouſe. I am glad of that, my dear boy; we ſhall have time to talk of a few matters.

Trunnion. Well, well, I can ſee you have enough to talk of theſe three hours or more perhaps: ſo, mother, ſhew me where to make the fire and dreſs the meat; I will do the whole myſelf.

Grace. At leaſt I will help you, my good ſir.

Trunnion. No, no; you have enough to do with George, ſo do but ſhew me to your kitchen; then you may come back, and talk together at your eaſe.

Grace. Since you will have it ſo.

SCENE

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SCENE VI.

Moorhouſe, George.

George. Then, father, you are not at your eaſe?

Moorhouſe. At our eaſe! Oh, no. Our trade is fallen from us, and in ſhort, theſe two years paſt, it is wonderful how we ſubſiſt!

George. But how is that poſſible? you that were formerly ſo well to live!

Moorhouſe. You have reaſon to be ſurpriſed at it, knowing as you do how laborious we always were, and that we did not manage like one half of our neighbours, who do not know how to lay by any thing againſt a rainy day. However, we have had ſevere loſſes ſince you left us, and now the worſt of it is that we are indebted to our landlord upwards of four pounds. We cannot pay it, and the ſteward threatens every day to turn us out of doors, in which caſe we muſt beg our bread.

George. Juſt Heavens! could I have thought to find you in ſo ſad a ſituation!

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Moorhouſe. We ſhould never have been in it, had the ſteward not contrived to make you, as he did, a ſoldier. It was wholly a contrivance on his part; I will tell you the particulars ſome other opportunity. When he was nothing but a bailiff, and had ſcarce a coat to wear, I would not lend him money, and it was then that he firſt of all began to hate us. And at length he has completed his revenge. Our houſe is to be ſold, and you will not poſſeſs a groat belonging to your father.

George. If you had but ſomething to ſubſiſt on, I ſhould not regard myſelf. Here is all the money that I poſſeſs. I give it you with tears, becauſe I have no more to ſpare you.

Moorhouſe. May heaven repay it to you a hundred fold, my dear child! This will keep us a few days.

George. Let me think a little. Cannot I ſpeak with this ſame ſteward?

Moorhouſe. He will be here this very day.

George. Then I will be ſure to tell him ſomething that may do you good. The king is coming to review our regiment; ſo you

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you ſhall go and tell him your ſad ſituation.

Moorhouſe. I go tell him! I ſhould not be able to pronounce a word before him. I ſhould ſtand ſtock ſtill, or perhaps run away through fear and terror, were I forced into his preſence!

George. Never fear: he would return you a kind anſwer. I was once a centinel at Windſor, on the Terrace, when the king was walking there: it was upon a Sunday evening. I ſhall never ſure forget with what familiarity he ſpoke to people; but that is nothing; for he met one morning with a poor man's child as he was walking through the town, and entering into converſation, found him ſuch a clever little fellow, that he ordered him a guinea: when the father heard it, he was ever on the watch to fall in with his majeſty, as he was walking out. He proved at laſt ſo fortunate as to obtain a hearing, when he thanked him for the guinea; upon which the king, would you believe it, ordered him another guinea for his gratitude, as he particularly mentioned.

Moorhouſe. You don't tell me ſo!

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George. Believe me, I would much rather have to ſpeak with him than many of our officers.

Moorhouſe. What a gracious king!

George. There cannot be a better. So pray hear what I intend to do; I will get our quarter-maſter to write me a petition; and though poſſibly you ſhould have twenty miles to walk, no matter.

Moorhouſe. And what, think you, will the king do for us?

George. I cannot tell exactly, but we will talk further about it to-morrow. In the mean time, be aſſured, dear father, it is much more agreeable to have to do with great than little people. Come, let us take a turn or two together through the village.

ACT

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ACT II.

SCENE I.

Moorhouſe, Grace, George, (ſtanding near a table.)

Grace. We have no more than two plates.

George. No matter, mother. Our provider will be with us very ſhortly.

Moorhouſe. What a deal of pains he takes on our account!

George. You do not know him yet: next to fighting, he likes nothing half ſo well as cooking: here he comes.

Trunnion, (entering with the meat and turnips dreſſed.) Here, my friends. Here is what will warm our ſtomachs this cold weather. I have made a little broth; and take a ſoldier's word, you will find it excellent. So let us ſit down; but firſt ſay grace.——Come, help yourſelves.—They ſay there is no ſuch thing as eating broth without a ſpoon: and ſo here is mine. *(He takes a knife and ſpoon out of his pocket.)*

Moorhouſe. I am very glad of that: we have but two. *(They help themſelves.)*

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Grace. (*to Moorhouſe.*) The broth is excellent!

Moorhouſe. I have not eat ſo good theſe many years.

George. Do not ſpare it then. To ſay the truth, I have taſted worſe.

Grace. We would never wiſh for better as long as we live: nay, nor yet ſo good, except on Sundays.

George. Well, let us now begin upon the meat.

Trunnion, (*to Moorhouſe.*) But how is this, my friend, you have no plate?

Grace. Oh, never mind: one plate will ſerve us both.

Trunnion. Here is mine.

Moorhouſe. By no means.

Trunnion. I can make myſelf a plate. (*He cuts a ſlice of bread, and puts his meat upon it.*) We ſhould be finely off in camp, if we were forced to wait for plates!

George. But father, you do not eat, what ails you?

Moorhouſe. Ah!

Trunnion. What makes you ſigh?

Moorhouſe. I cannot help ſighing, to reflect I ſhould have treated George at my expence

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expence on his return, but was without a bit of bread to give him.

George. Pray do not talk at this rate, father.

Trunnion. No, no, do not even think about it. Come, your health! (*he drinks.*) Now you, good friend.

Moorhouſe, (*taking the mug.*) Come, here is our benefactor's health; and many bleſſings on him for his kindneſs. (*Drinking.*)

Grace. Oh! a thouſand bleſſings!—— (*Drinking.*)

George. Comrade, my hearty thanks to you for this day's friendſhip ſhewn my parents.

Trunnion. Do you wiſh to make me proud? You drink my health, as if I had won a battle!

Moorhouſe. Ay, and you deſerve we ſhould. You have yourſelf but little, and part with it for our ſakes. (*A knock without.*)

Grace. Who's there?

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SCENE II.

Moorhouſe, Grace, George, Trunnion, the Captain, Serjeant.

George. Our captain!

Serjeant, (*with a pocket-book in his hand.*) How many are you here?

George, (*riſing.*) Two. (*They all riſe.*)

The Captain. Very well. Do not ſtir: and you too, my good people, keep your ſeats, make no ceremony. I am charmed to ſee ſo much harmony and cordiality amongſt you. Have you (*to Moorhouſe*) any complaint againſt theſe men?

Moorhouſe. Oh! no ſir; if they are ſatisfied with us.

The Captain, (*to George.*) Do you like your quarters?

George. Sir, I am quartered with my father: it is my comrade's part to anſwer.

Trunnion. We have every thing that we deſire.

The Captain, (*to Moorhouſe.*) What! is this young man your ſon? You are very happy then; for I can tell you, all the regiment

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ment love him. (*He looks round about him.*) I am afraid your circumſtances are not of the eaſieſt: but you are rich in having ſuch a ſon!

George. I thank you, captain, for reſerving this favourable teſtimony of me for the ears of my parents, and ſhall ſo behave myſelf, I hope, that they may never loſe the happineſs that it affords them.

Moorhouſe. O, good ſir! my boſom overflows with joy.

Grace. We ſhould be happier, captain, could you let him ſtay with us.

Moorhouſe. What, wife, to die of hunger? Would you think it, ſir, this generous ſoldier, though a ſtranger to us, bought the dinner that we have been eating, otherwiſe we ſhould not have had bread to give our ſon? We have loſt our cuſtom; and beſides, our landlord, for about four pounds that we owe him—

The Captain. Threatens perhaps to turn you out of doors? The caſe, alas, is far too common: and I pity you ſincerely. Here is a piece of gold that I chance to have about me: it will be of ſome aſſiſtance to you. George, this is what your conduct has deſerved;

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deſerved; for it is on your account I give it to your parents.

George. Ah, my generous captain! if you knew how ſerviceable ſuch a gift is, you would ſay yourſelf that I never can repay you as I ought.

Moorhouſe. God only can repay ſuch bounty.

Grace. May he grant you many years of happineſs! If I had twenty children, I would let you have them every one with pleaſure.

The Captain. Good woman! you repay my kindneſs very much indeed. One child is valuable to a parent, and you would give me twenty! but I interrupt your dinner. Farewell, good people. I will come once again and ſee you, if I can, before we go.

Serjeant. Trunnion, be ready for the next relief: the guard will turn out very ſoon.

SCENE

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SCENE III.

Moorhouſe, Grace, George, Trunnion.

Trunnion, (*drinking.*) Long live our noble captain!

George. So I ſay indeed; for he has ſaved us all from dying.

Moorhouſe. He yet never ſaw us, and we get a piece of gold! who could have thought that a ſtranger would compaſſionate our ſituation, when we are treated with ſo much barbarity by thoſe that know us?

Grace. O the bleſſed gentleman! but how much is it worth? (*looking at the piece of gold.*) It muſt be of pretty large value.

Moorhouſe. Good heavens! could I ſuppoſe that I ſhould ever ſtand in ſuch need of a ſingle piece of money! What is it? Do you know its value, George?

George. I never ſaw ſo large a piece.

Trunnion. It is more, I am certain, than a guinea: but I cannot tell how much.—Stay, let me ſee.—Oh! now I recollect. It is what they call a ſix-and-thirty: there are ſeveral now going about. They come from

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from Portugal: it is nearly worth two guineas.

Grace. What! two guineas! almoſt half our debt: if the ſteward would take this in part, it would make us eaſy.

Moorhouſe. I hope he will give us a little time for the remainder.

Grace. Do you think that is likely? I ſhould be content to live upon dry bread till next winter, provided we were not obliged to leave our houſe.

George. Do not be uneaſy mother, I will try what I can do with him.

Grace. We ſtood ſo much in fear of ſoldiers, and a ſoldier is now our guardian angel! God's good providence be praiſed for this repaſt, and the aſſiſtance that he has ſent us. (*They all riſe.*)

Trunnion. Well now, I will put every thing away.

Grace. Yes, truly, if I would let you. Reſt yourſelf; I will do that myſelf.

Trunnion. No, no; it is part of my employ. I will have you recollect the day we quartered in your little cot as long as you both live.

Grace. There is no reſiſting you. (*Trunnion*

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nion takes the things out.) I am not furpriſed that the women are ſo fond of ſoldiers; they muſt make ſuch huſbands! they do all the work themſelves, and with ſo much dexterity! but I muſt follow, or he will waſh the plates. (*She is going, but returns.*) Ah! here is brother Thomas. Let us obſerve if he will remember George.

SCENE IV.

Moorhouſe, Grace, George, Thomas.

Grace. (*to Thomas.*) Look, brother, here is a young man come to ſee us. Don't take him for a common ſoldier though. Have you any knowledge of him? or you George, have you? go to him: it is your uncle Thomas.

George. Juſt as if I did not recollect him!

Thomas. I your uncle?—let me ſee.—— No—Yes—Yes, he himſelf. My nephew, as I live!—(*They embrace.*) One need not aſk about your health; you look ſo very well!

George. I hope, dear uncle, you are as well as I am.

Grace.

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Grace. I could wiſh you did but know how much his captain praiſes him! I wiſh I could ſtay and tell you; but I am forced to go, or I believe our cook would ſet the houſe to rights from top to bottom.

SCENE V.

Moorhouſe, Thomas, George.

Thomas. I rejoice, dear nephew, with all my heart, to ſee you ſafe come home: however truſt me if you have not heard the whole already, you could never have returned to find us more unhappy. We are all as poor, as if the country had been pillaged.

Moorhouſe. And our landlord's wicked ſteward would gladly, if he could, ſuck out the little blood that is left us.

George. You no longer need have any fear of him, as you can pay down half the ſum that you owe him. He muſt needs be patient, till ſuch time as you can pay the reſt.

Moorhouſe, (*letting Thomas ſee his piece of gold.*) See brother; ſee what George has got me.

Thomas,

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Thomas, (*to George.*) Did you ſave it from your pay, or is it plunder?

George. Neither one, nor the other; it is a preſent from my captain who was here juſt now.

Moorhouſe. It is to George however that I am obliged for it: his captain gave it me, becauſe he had behaved himſelf ſo well.

Thomas. In truth I am ſo much better pleaſed; becauſe a ſoldier, who would lay up ſuch a deal of money from his ſlender pay, muſt certainly deprive himſelf of many little comforts in this life: and, as to plunder, juſtify it how you will, it is always villainouſly got, and never proſpers.

George. That was what I always thought; and therefore never would go pillaging: indeed with all the plunder that others got, I found they were not richer than myſelf: but on the contrary, ſpent half their time in the black hole, being always guilty of ſome crime or other, after they had been a robbing, for it was nothing elſe; whereas my officers were never troubled with complaints of me.

Thomas. I eaſily believe you. All your family are honeſt people; and you would not,

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not, I am ſure, be the only good-for-nothing fellow of the number. We are poor indeed, but have the fear of God before our eyes, and that is much better than the greateſt riches.

Moorhouſe. Yes; and if the ſteward—

Thomas. Softly brother, here he comes.

SCENE VI.

Moorhouſe, George, Thomas, the Steward.

The Steward. Well, Moorhouſe; to-morrow is juſt at hand. You are ready I ſuppoſe to pay your rent, or elſe to quit your houſe.

Moorhouſe. I cannot, my good ſir, pay more than half; nor ſhould I have been able to do that, if Providence had not aſſiſted me. Be ſo indulgent as to wait till harveſt for the reſt, and do not compleat my ruin by diſtreſſing me ſtill further than I am diſtreſſed already.

The Steward. By diſtreſſing you! the common cant: the more one does, the more one may for ſuch as you. How long, pray, has not this ſame rent of yours been growing?

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ing? yet my lord diſtreſſes you; and why? becauſe at laſt he tells you that he will have his money!

Moorhouſe. But is half of what we owe him nothing? Take that half, let me beſeech you, and intreat my lord in our behalf.

The Steward. Yes, yes, intreat him to let you lead him by the noſe another twelve month? I ſhall hardly do ſo: therefore pay the whole; or elſe I ſeize, that's certain.

George. Oh! a little mercy, my good ſir; and think that with a ſingle word you have it in your power to make my father happy. If there's nothing goes unpuniſhed in this world, 'tis ſurely no ſmall matter to reduce an honeſt man to beggary.

The Steward. Mind your muſquet, and not my affairs.

George. My muſquet, ſir, belongs to the king, and I ſhall take care of it without your inſtructions. If the king were here preſent, he would not take it amiſs that I ſhould ſpeak for my parents, and yet, I think, there is ſome difference between you and him.

The

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The Steward. Mr. Soldier, you may have ſeen ſervice, as they call it, but remember that you are not talking now to ſome boor whom you have plundered, and have at your mercy.

George. I never talked to any man as, I think, I ſhould to you (*now I know your diſpoſition,*) were I to meet you in an enemy's country.

The Steward. You will never have that ſatisfaction.

Thomas. Excuſe a ſoldier's bluntneſs, my good ſir.

The Steward. Hold your tongue likewiſe.—I have you down in my papers, I believe.

Thomas. I am ſure you have; and not me only, but all honeſt people.

The Steward. What do you mean by that?

SCENE

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SCENE VII.

Moorhouſe, George, Thomas, the Steward, Grace, Trunnion.

Grace. The ſteward here!

Moorhouſe. Be quiet, wife.—For Heaven's ſake, let me beg you, Mr. Steward—

The Steward. All your prayers are uſeleſs; and to-morrow you ſhall ſet out on your travels.

Grace. You will ſurely have ſome pity on us. We ſhall ſoon get work. Here is half your money, and our houſe will ſtill be ſtanding for the other half, if we ſhould break our word.

The Steward. Still ſtanding! you may burn it: but if not, I muſt obey the orders of his lordſhip.

George. Has his lordſhip ordered you to ruin a whole family, for what my father owes him? You are paid to take whatever care you can of his affairs; and by proceeding as you would you do not earn your wages. Therefore take my counſel, and for once fulfil your duty.

The Steward. Will you tell me what my duty

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duty is? you may keep your counſel to yourſelf; I tell you that.

George. And you, I tell you, may be civil.

The Steward. Who taught you all this impudence?

Trunnion. Suppoſe yourſelf a moment in this young man's ſituation. He is a ſoldier, and a ſoldier always knows what he is to ſay; a thouſand times better, at leaſt, than any ſteward. You have dared before his face, to tell his father that he ſhall go upon his travels. We all know the meaning of that phraſe: and would you have him ſtand there like a poſt before you, without having the ſpirit to open his lips? Who could keep his temper if he ſaw his family on the point of being ruined by an ill-natured cur of your ſtamp? We know what ſtewards are, and how they make fortunes. This young man ſpoke to you civilly at firſt, and you ſlighted him. He is in the right now to ſpeak the truth to you.

The Steward. This is paſt bearing. (*Turns in a violent rage to Moorhouſe.*) Are you diſpoſed to pay? I aſk you but once more.

Moorhouſe. I have told you that it is not in my power.

Grace.

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Grace. And offered you the little that we have.

The Steward. I will have the whole or nothing.—If it is not ſent to-morrow, you ſhall hear from me.

George, (ſtopping him.) Once more.

The Steward. Let me go. I'll not have any thing to do with ſuch a ragamuffin.

George, (ſtriking him.) Ragamuffin! You are ſpeaking to a ſoldier, ſir, take that: and out with you. Old raſcal! get you gone! *(he puſhes him out.)*

The Steward. Oh! vengeance! vengeance!

SCENE XIII.

Moorhouſe, Grace, Thomas, George, Trunnion.

Grace. George, my dear George, what have you done!

Moorhouſe. We are ruined.

George. Do not be frightened, father. Had you wept even blood, he would not have relaxed. I never ſtruck a man before; but I was never called a ragamuffin

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in my life till now. Could I be a ſoldier had I borne it?

Trunnion. If you had not ſtruck him, I was ready to ſtrike you.

Moorhouſe. Who knows what it may coſt us?

George. What, becauſe I would not be inſulted?

Grace. It was very wrong in you; for notwithſtanding he inſulted you, yet ſtill you ſhould have recollected that he is my lord's ſteward.

George. Pſhaw! he is not the firſt of his profeſſion that has undergone a ſoldier's vengeance. I, for my part, think it perfect ſympathy, that when a ſoldier ſees a rogue, he naturally knocks him down.

Grace. I can't help thinking we ſhould certainly have ſoftened him at laſt.

George. No, truſt me, never.

Grace, (to Moorhouſe.) What think you, my love? It will be much better for us to go after him.

George. It would be uſeleſs.

Moorhouſe. That may be; but I am reſolved, it ſhall not be ſaid that I have left any

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any means untried. So Grace, let us go together.

George. Well, ſince you will go, let it be ſo: but if he yields, I'll eat my hat.

Moorhouſe. Come, wife, let us try this only method left us; and Heaven's will be done, if it ſhould fail.

Grace. Sure, ſince we have ſtruggled through life thus far, Providence will not let us periſh with hunger at laſt.

Trunnion. Your mother, I can ſee, has all her neceſſary conſolations ready when ſhe wants them. I will go ſee, on my ſide, what our comrades are doing.

SCENE IX.

George, Thomas.

George. And do you think, uncle, that I have expoſed my parents to the ſteward's malice more, by my behaviour, than they were already?

Thomas. Truſt me, ſo I fear, though it was bad enough before between them. And yet, nephew, they might certainly have mended their affairs laſt week, if they had only had a little leſs compaſſion.

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George. How, dear uncle?

Thomas. They discovered a deserter, but would not inform against him, notwithstanding the reward.

George. Indeed!

Thomas. The blacksmith here hard by was not so scrupulous, and got the money.

George, (to himself.) A deserter! a thought strikes me.—(*To Thomas.*) O uncle! I can save my father, if I please; but must have your assistance. May I trust you?

Thomas. Certainly.

George. But can you keep a secret?

Thomas. I have always thought I could.

George. Whatever happens?

Thomas. Yes, provided there is no wickedness in the affair.

George. None, uncle.

Thomas. Well then, speak.

George. But were you to betray me?

Thomas. It must sure be some extraordinary matter?

George. Yes; but you will have no reason to fear any thing.

Thomas. Well, come then to the purpose.

George. I will desert this very night. You shall secure me, and get forty shillings

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lings by it, which will nearly pay my father's debt.

Thomas. I fancy you are turned fool! What, I ſecure you? I, your uncle? Why not bid me take a muſquet up at once, and ſhoot you?

George. There is no muſquet in the caſe. A ſoldier is never ſhot the firſt time that he deſerts.

Thomas. Well then, at leaſt he is flogged ſeverely.

George. But I need not fear even that; for all the officers of the regiment love me, and I am ſure I ſhall get off.

Thomas. No, no; I cannot conſent. Suppoſe your father was to know it?

George. Can he know it, if we keep the ſecret? For deſerting, as I have told you, I ſhall not be ſhot: though, were there any room to fear it, I have often riſqued my life to benefit my country; I can riſque it ſurely then to benefit my father. Think too, he is your brother, and that by this way only we can ſave him and my mother too from beggary, and perhaps from death.

Thomas. The devil, ſure, has brought me

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into this temptation. I cannot tell what reſolution I ſhould take.

George. Remember you have promiſed me, will you break your word? In my deſpair I ſhall deſert, and then my father will get nothing by it: ſo that you have no affection for your family if you refuſe me.

Thomas. No affection!—You hold out a knife before me, and are ready, as it were, to ſtab me to the heart.

George. Well, uncle, take your choice. Time preſſes.

Thomas. But ſhould you deceive me, nephew! Should your ſentence be——

George. Of death, I have told you, there is no fear. At worſt, it will not exceed a whipping. I know how to ſuffer, and at every laſh I ſhall bethink me that I have ſaved my father.

Thomas. Well then, I conſent to do as you direct me; but ſhould matters fall out otherwiſe——

George. How can they fall out otherwiſe? Give me your hand, and be ſecret. Our people call the Roll, as we term it, at ſix o'clock, and he that does not anſwer to his name is marked down as a deſerter; now you

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you ſhall conduct me to the guard-room to-night, and inform them that you apprehended me ten miles out of town, as I was deſerting from the regiment.

Thomas. It is the firſt deceit that I ever was concerned in.

George. Do not reproach yourſelf with it, dear uncle, ſince it will get us both a bleſſing. Let us embrace once more; and now go, find my father. But take care! let me conjure you not to cauſe ſuſpicion. If I am doing wrong, God will aſſuredly forgive me. What ſhould not a duteous ſon do for the preſervation of his parents?

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Priſon.*

Drums and other muſic at a diſtance.

Trunnion, (*coming in.*) Oh! my poor dear George! He ſhould have told us his diſtreſs about the curſed ſteward, and not thus deſerted. Who would have imagined it laſt night? to have gone off, been apprehended, and ſuffered his puniſhment all within the

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compaſs of a night and a morning! But it is over, and I am glad of it. He has borne it like a hero; never uttered a ſingle groan; the regiment that loved him ſo well hitherto, will, I am ſure, not love him the worſe for it; for my part I could have gone through half the puniſhment for him. But here he comes.

SCENE II.

Trunnion, George, Serjeant.

George, (entering, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven.) Thank heaven! it is over, and my father is ſafe!

Serjeant, (in ſurpriſe.) His father is ſafe! what does he mean by that?

George. Dear Trunnion!

Trunnion, (embracing him.) O my deareſt friend! how fares it with you?

George. Do not ſhed tears for my ſake, comrade; I am much happier than you think.

Serjeant, (aſide.) What can all this mean?—Shall I go fetch the ſurgeon?

George. No Serjeant, I thank you.

Serjeant.

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Serjeant, (*aſide, ſhaking his head.*) There is ſomething of a myſtery in all this. I will go and tell my captain what I think of the affair. (*goes out.*)

SCENE III.

George, Trunnion.

Trunnion. Well at leaſt then take a drop of ſomething to ſupport you. (*Giving him a glaſs of liquor.*)

George, (*ſqueezing Trunnion by the hand.*) Thank you heartily, good comrade. (*He drinks.*)

Trunnion. I am rejoiced that the court, in conſequence of our requeſt in your behalf, remitted ſo much of your ſentence. But pray tell me, comrade, what poſſeſſed you to deſert thus!

George. I am aſhamed, dear Trunnion, to conceal the reaſon from you; ſo do not aſk me; it is a ſecret that I can never mention.

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SCENE IV.

Trunnion, George, Thomas.

Thomas, (entering violently agitated.) Well, now are you ſatisfied?—

Trunnion. Softly! ſoftly! You ſeem agitated. Do not diſturb your nephew, he wants reſt. A man is not always the ſame.

George, (whiſpering his uncle.) You are angry, uncle. Should you ſpeak of the affair between us, you will undo me.

Thomas. I am undone already.

George. Are you ſerious?—*(to Trunnion.)* Prithee, my good friend, leave us a moment to ourſelves. *(Trunnion retires a little.)*

Thomas. Your father is in ſo great a paſſion that he will not ſee me, on account of my having informed againſt you, and received the money. Beſides he will not accept a farthing of it. When I offered it to him, he rejected it with horror. God forbid! cried he, it is the price of my ſon's blood. What then ſhall I do? There is ſcarce a boy in the village but will pelt me for my

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my treachery, as they call it; and all this through you.

George. Be pacified, dear uncle! every thing will yet be well. The worſt is paſt: and you have only to go back and tell my father that I deſire to ſee him.

Thomas. No, not I:—he won't permit me to approach him. I informed you ſo before. But how is this! I ſee him coming with my ſiſter.

SCENE V.

George, Thomas, Moorhouſe, Grace.

Grace. Where is my ſon? Let me ſee him.

Trunnion. This way, good mother; here he is.

Grace, (running up to George.) What have you been doing, ſon? How could you cauſe us ſo much ſorrow?

Moorhouſe. (in anger.) Are you here, unhappy wretch? You have yourſelf converted all the joy that you gave me yeſterday into diſtreſs and ſorrow. I will never ſee you more.

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George. Dear father, pray forgive me! I have undergone my puniſhment.

Moorhouſe. Yes, for flying from your colours; but you have not ſuffered for diſgracing us in our old age. Sure ſixty years, all paſſed without a blot upon our character, entitled us to hope that we ſhould have died without one: and yet now you have covered us with infamy. But we renounce you!

George. Pardon, pardon me, dear father! Heaven is my witneſs, I have not diſgraced you, and was far from wiſhing to diſgrace you.

Thomas, (aſide.) Oh! what torture to hear this, and yet be forced to ſtand thus ſilent!

George, (following Moorhouſe.) Do not, do not, father, leave me thus, without embracing me! Oh! ſtay a moment! And you, mother, can you ſhew yourſelf as cruel?

Grace. What can I do, ſon?

Moorhouſe. Never call him ſon. He has forfeited that name.

Grace. Forgive him, good man! He is ſtill our child.

Thomas. Yes, brother, let your heart be moved to pity his affliction.

Moorhouſe.

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Moorhouſe. Hold your tongue! You are full as bad as he is; you that ſell your nephew for the ſake of money. I will no more be your brother, than his father.

Grace, (*having talked a little while with George.*) Hear me, huſband! He makes ſolemn promiſes. Do not make us both wretched! After all, he is our child, the only one that we have, and can we then not love him?

Moorhouſe. Don't ſpeak one word more, woman, but follow me! (*He is going out, but Trunnion holds him.*)

Trunnion. Come, maſter Moorhouſe; enough! You have vented your paſſion: let all be forgotten. The king accepts him again; why ſhould not you! Give him, give him your hand. Do you think that I ſhould continue to have a regard for him, if he did not deſerve it?

Grace. Hear that, my love! Do not be more hard-hearted towards him than ſtrangers are. Beſides, conſider what his captain ſaid yeſterday in his behalf.

Moorhouſe. I ſee him coming: ſo I will ſpeak to him before I anſwer.

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SCENE VI.

George, Thomas, Moorhouſe, Grace, Captain, Serjeant, Trunnion.

Moorhouſe. Ah! ſir, does it not afflict you, when you recollect that yeſterday you ſaid ſo much in praiſe of my unworthy ſon?

The Captain. He had deſerved it; though indeed I could not have ſuppoſed my commendation would have had ſuch bad effects. But (*to George*) tell me what could poſſibly induce you to deſert! You muſt have had ſome very urgent motive. Let me know the ſecrets of your heart, whatever be the conſequence. You have been puniſhed, and have therefore nothing now to fear.

George. My worthy captain, do not, I beſeech you, take away your favour from me! I will endeavour to deſerve it.

The Captain. If you tell the truth, I will not. For to fancy that you deſerted for a quarrel, which, I underſtand, you had with a ſteward, is abſurd.

George. And yet, your honour may be certain, there is no other reaſon. It is well known,

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known, I never was remarkable for quarrelling with any one. The leaſt offence appears enormous, when one has not been accuſtomed to it. I was ſo diſturbed at the affair that it took away my reaſon; and beſides, the unhappy ſituation of my father aided to diſtract me.

The Captain. What then ſignified theſe words that you ſaid on entering the priſon with the ſerjeant? *Thank Heaven, it is over, and my father is ſafe!*

Moorhouſe, (*aſtoniſhed.*) Were thoſe his words, ſir? God forgive me, but the devil ſurely muſt have turned his brain.

George, (*ſighing.*) I do not remember to have ſaid thoſe words.

Serjeant. I remember to have heard you ſay them, when you firſt entered this room.

Trunnion. Yes, yes, comrade, that you did. I myſelf heard you alſo, now I recollect.

George. They muſt then have certainly eſcaped me in my pain.

The Captain. They might ſo; yet they are not without a meaning.

George, (*in great embarraſſment.*) I do not know what anſwer to make you.

The

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The Captain, (*taking him by the hand.*) Do not, my honeſt fellow, ſtudy to deceive us. This deſertion has ſome other reaſon than your quarrel. Your diſſimulation very much diſpleaſes me; and you are likely to loſe all my friendſhip. Was it not on account of your father——

George, (*eagerly.*) How ſay you, ſir. Do not believe——

The Captain. I ſee, you are not worth the trouble that I am taking for you, and no longer wiſh to be informed of any thing about you. You are more indifferent to me than the worſt of men. You do not know, perhaps, how much you have loſt by this prevarication.

Thomas. I muſt tell it then, at laſt.

George, (*interrupting him.*) Dear uncle, would you wiſh to make us more unhappy than we are?

Thomas, (*to the Captain.*) I can explain the whole affair, ſir; but have reaſon to fear leſt the miſchief ſhould become ſtill greater.

The Captain. No, you have nothing to fear; I give you my promiſe.

Thomas.

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Thomas. Well then, good ſir, it was to ſave his parents that he deſerted. He found means to make me turn informer, and get forty ſhillings, that his father might have wherewithal to pay his debts; but now, his father will not hear a word about the money or his ſon. Let me beſeech you therefore, ſir, to rid me of this money, which I cannot keep, and interpoſe at leaſt with your authority and kindneſs, that my brother may be profited by what his ſon has ſo affectionately done to benefit him; for the affair is exactly as I relate it to you. (*Every one appears aſtoniſhed.*)

The Captain. George what do you ſay to this?

George, (*burſting into tears.*) You have heard the truth. However, I beſeech your honour to believe that nothing but my father's ſafety could induce me to deſert my colours. I deſpiſed the danger, hoping to ſave him; but, ſince every thing is diſcovered, and my hopes all loſt, I muſt ſuffer more ſeverely.

Moorhouſe, (*embracing George.*) What, dear George! and was it for my ſake you did all this?

Grace,

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Grace, (*embracing him alſo.*) Yes, now indeed we may embrace him; though, indeed my heart informed me all along that he could not be ſo guilty.

The Captain, (*taking George by the hand.*) Oh, my generous youth! what affection and what courage! Yet, to ſay the truth, your filial piety has carried you too far; for to deſert is always blameable.

Moorhouſe. Moſt certainly! Heaven keep me from becoming richer by a penny of this money!

George. There now, uncle, ſee what comes of your revealing the affair! I have made myſelf a double criminal to get my father money, which you find he will not accept.

Thomas. Yes, yes, you have this to lay to my charge, I muſt acknowledge; but his honour made me a promiſe firſt of all.

The Captain, (*to Thomas.*) Let your brother have the money. Take it, (*to Moorhouſe,*) my good friend; for George has deſerved it richly.

Moorhouſe I can never bring myſelf to take ſuch ill-got money.

The Captain. I *will* have you take it! and what is more, I will go and tell the matter

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matter to our colonel.—(*To George.*) You have not done your duty as a ſoldier, I acknowledge; but have ſhown yourſelf a ſon in ſuch a manner, that he cannot but be moved when made acquainted with it. Wait me: I will return immediately. (*The Captain and Serjeant go out,*)

SCENE VII.

George, Thomas, Moorhouſe, Grace, Trunnion.

George. My conſolation is, that I can now with greater confidence entreat you to forgive me, as I have finiſhed your misfortunes, and the ſteward will not have it in his power to hurt you.

Trunnion. Yes, my good old man, forgive your ſon! He will be cured the ſooner, if he has your bleſſing: and beſides, you ought to conſider that he is to poſſeſs your cottage after you.

Moorhouſe. He is, and therefore I will preſerve it for him. Come, my ſon, forgive your father, who has uſed you thus unkindly. Heaven can tell how much I ſuffered, from the thought that you had left your

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your colours; and it ſeems, you were diſcharging even then your duty towards me. How ſhall I repay you for ſo much affection, in the little time that I have to live?

George. By loving me, as you have always done.

Grace. Oh, yes! and ten times more; for every bit of bread that we eat, we will ſay to one another, it is our dear ſon's gift.

George. I am ſatisfied. And I thank you, uncle, for the ſervice that you have done me.

Thomas. You thank me, do you? I am glad that matters have turned out as well as they have. But never make ſuch a ticklish experiment again. And now, brother, have you ſtill a grudge againſt me? If it had not been from my wiſh to ſerve you, I would never have been concerned in my nephew's ſcheme, no more than he would; and ſince you pardon him, you may extend your liberality to me.

Moorhouſe. What can excuſe your conduct, brother? I may throw myſelf into the flames, but he that lights them for me ought to be conſidered cruel. Yes, indeed. However,

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However, I will not hate you: there is my hand.

Trunnion. Comrade, hitherto I have loved, but now reſpect you. Let us embrace then, and be always friends.

SCENE VIII.

George, Thomas, Moorhouſe, Grace, Trunnion, the Captain.

The Captain. Good luck! good luck! You are a ſerjeant on the ſpot. The colonel, when I told him the affair between your father and yourſelf, was happy to promote you. Take this alſo (*giving him a purſe of money*) from him, as a witneſs how much he applauds your filial piety.

Moorhouſe and Grace. O, ſir, may heaven reward you!

The Captain. Nothing in all this is due to me: the colonel has done every thing. (*George embraces his parents one after the other, and then turning to the Captain, ſays*) I beg your honour's pardon!

The Captain. You deſerve the pleaſure of embracing thoſe that gave you birth, to whom

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whom you have ſo well diſcharged your duty.

Thomas. Well, could any one have thought that old Thomas, ſimple as he is, would come to make a ſerjeant, as, it is plain, I have?

Trunnion. Yes, yes: and therefore, Mr. Serjeant—

George, (embracing him.) Call me nothing but comrade and friend, as we have always been.

Trunnion. Well then, comrade, let us break off a little for the preſent: and as nothing like good liquor ſuits a joyous time, let us, as ſoon as we are able, make up for the ſorrows of laſt night and this morning. His honour and the colonel ſhall be toaſted firſt.

THE BED OF DEATH.

DUNCAN, a bricklayer's labourer, living in a diſtant country town, had loſt his wife about a quarter of a year before

fore the event we are to write of. The expences of a tedious illneſs, and the interruption of his labour by a very rainy ſeaſon, had reduced him to the laſt diſtreſs. His children were half naked, and had really no bread to eat. This circumſtance was of itſelf ſufficiently tormenting; but to aggravate the ſcene, Suſanna, his poor mother, laid upon a little ſtraw in the corner of the cottage, was almoſt in the agonies of death.

Duncan, at ſuch a proſpect round about him, overwhelmed with ſorrow, took a broken matted chair, and at a little diſtance from Suſanna's bed ſat down upon it, having both his hands held up, that he might hide his tears.

His mother turning towards him, with a feeble voice enquired, if there was no where in the houſe a rag to put upon her. I cannot make myſelf warm, ſaid ſhe, do what I will.

Duncan. Stay, mother; I will pull off my coat, and lay it on you.

Suſanna. No, no; I will not have it, my dear ſon. A little ſtraw, if you have nothing elſe, will do as well. But have you not a ſingle bit of wood ſtill left to make a fire

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a fire for theſe poor children? You will tell me, you cannot go into the fields, becauſe of the attention that I require. My life is very long, ſince I am grown burthenſome to you!

Duncan. Pray do not ſay ſo, dear mother. Would to God I could procure you what you want, at the expence of my own life! I would freely give it up: but this is my grief, that you ſuffer cold and hunger, while I am utterly unable to relieve you.

Suſanna. Do not let that, however, afflict you much, my poor ſon. Thank God, my agonies are not ſo great as your affection fears they may be: they will very quickly finiſh, and my bleſſing will be the recompence of what you are doing now, and have been always doing for me.

Duncan. O my poor dear mother! In my infancy you put yourſelf to many difficulties for my maintenance; and I, in your old age, muſt thus ſit by and ſee you want for common neceſſaries! That, dear mother rends my heart.

Suſanna. I know, it is not through any fault of yours; and then, Duncan, upon a death-bed one has few—(believe me when I tell

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I tell you ſo)—few earthly wants. Our heavenly father has us then particularly in his care. I thank you heartily, my dear. Your love conſoles me in this hour of my departure.

Duncan. What, dear mother, have you then no hopes of recovering?

Suſanna. No; I feel within me that I muſt die of this complaint.

Duncan. You do not ſay ſo?

Suſanna. Do not afflict yourſelf! I ſhall ſoon be in a better world.

Duncan, (with ſighs.) Oh heaven! oh heaven!

Suſanna. I ſay, my ſon, this need not grieve you. You were all my happineſs when I was young, and now you prove the joy of my laſt moments. Soon, yes very ſoon, thank heaven, you will have nothing left you but to cloſe my eye-lids. I ſhall then aſcend to my Creator, tell what you have done for me, and earneſtly beſeech him to reward you for it everlaſtingly. Think frequently of me, and I will think of you above.

Duncan. Yes, always, always.

Suſanna. There is only one thing in the

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world that gives me pain when I think of it.

Duncan. And what is that mother?

Suſanna. I am muſtering up my ſtrength to tell you. And believe me, I *muſt* tell you; for it is like a ſtone oppreſſing me at heart.

Duncan. Comfort yourſelf, dear mother, then, and ſpeak.

Suſanna. I ſaw your little Arthur come yeſterday here cloſe behind my bed, and pull out ſeveral apples, which he eat. Duncan, theſe apples were not ours; for then he would have thrown them on the table, and aſked me to take ſome. I remember ſtill how lovingly he uſed to come and fling himſelf into my arms, when he had any thing to give me; ſaying with ſo much good-nature, Eat ſome, do, my dear grandmother. O my dear, dear ſon! if he ſhould be a thief hereafter! The thought has afflicted me ever ſince yeſterday. Where is he? Pray go fetch him. I would talk a little to him.

Duncan. Wretch that I am! (*He runs and fetches Arthur, and puts him by Suſanna; ſhe raiſes herſelf with difficulty, turns about, takes*

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takes both his hands in hers. and leans her head upon his ſhoulder.)

Arthur. Grandmother, do you want me! You don't me call here, I hope, to ſee you die!

Suſanna. No, no; fear nothing, my poor Arthur, I do not deſire to frighten you; and yet, my deareſt, I ſhall die, and very ſoon too.

Arthur. But not yet. Do not die till I am bigger.

(*Suſanna falls backward in her bed. The child and father look at one another weeping, and each takes her by the hand.*)

Suſanna, (*coming ſomewhat to herſelf.*) I am much better now that I have changed my poſture.

Arthur. So then you won't die?

Suſanna. Be comforted, my little fellow. Dying is not painful to me, as I am going to a tender father, who at preſent waits in heaven to ſee me. When I am once with him, I ſhall be better off than here. Soon, ſoon my little fellow, I ſhall ſee him.

Arthur. Well then, take me with you: I will go too.

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Suſanna. No, my dear, you ſhall not go with me; but, if it pleaſes God, remain a good while here behind me. You ſhall live to be a virtuous and good man, and when your father is as ill as I am, you ſhall be his conſolation, and afford him the aſſiſtance that he needs. Won't you, Arthur? Won't you obey him conſtantly, and do whatever you think will give him pleaſure? See, he does whatever he is able for my ſake. And won't you promiſe me that you will do ſo too?

Arthur. Yes, certainly I will, grandmother.

Suſanna. Take care then how you perform your promiſe. God who made both earth and heaven, cannot but ſee every thing that you do. I ſuppoſe, you believe this.

Arthur. Yes, I do believe it: you have taught me ſo yourſelf.

Suſanna. How then, my deareſt Arthur, could you ſuppoſe that he would not ſee you come here yeſterday behind my bed, and eat the apples that you had ſtolen?

Arthur. I will do ſo no more—no, never grandmother, believe me, while I live. Forgive

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give me what I have done, and pray that God Almighty would forgive me too.

Suſanna. It is true then, is it, that you ſtole thoſe apples?

Arthur, (ſobbing.) Ye-e-es.

Suſanna. And pray of whom?

Arthur. Of ne-e-eighbour Le-e-onard.

Suſanna. You muſt go to neighbour Leonard then, and aſk his pardon.

Arthur. Oh, do not ſend me there, pray grandmother. I dare not go.

Suſanna. You *muſt*, my little friend, that you may never do the like again. For heaven's ſake, my dear child, in future never take what does not belong to you; not even a bit of bread, though you were ſtarving. God will never let you want, ſince it was he who created you. Truſt then to his aſſiſtance, tell him when you ſuffer, and be ſure that he will conſole you.

Arthur. Certainly, grandmother, certainly, I will never ſteal again: I promiſe you I will not: and for the future I would much rather die of hunger than ſteal any thing.

Suſanna. God hear and bleſs your reſolution from his holy habitation. I have hopes

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that of his goodneſs he will keep you from ſo great a ſin. (*She claſps him to her heart, and weeps.*) You muſt, my little boy, this inſtant go to neighbour Leonard, and deſire him to forgive you. Tell him that I, too, beg him to forgive you. Go, my good Duncan, with Arthur; inform him how it grieves me, that I am not able to make him reſtitution for the theft; but that I will pray to God for his proſperity, and beg a bleſſing on his family. Alas! he is no leſs poor than we; and were it not that his good woman works ſo hard, he could never bring up ſuch a family of children as he has. My dear good ſon, for my ſake, when I am dead and buried, give him a day's work to make him up his loſs: it matters not how little he has ſuffered. We ſhould think it criminal to take away a pin. You will remember this, Duncan?

Duncan. Yes, mother; ſo do not let the matter make you any more uneaſy.

He had hardly ſaid theſe words, when, as it chanced, 'Squire Wealthy's ſteward tapped without againſt the window.

Poor Suſanna knew him by his uſual way of tapping, and the cough he conſtantly had

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had on him. Bleſs me, it is the ſteward! ſaid ſhe. Surely ſome great miſchief threatens us. He is like a raven, croaking at the window ſome bad tidings.

Duncan. Do not be frightened thus, my good mother: I am not a ſingle farthing in his debt; and for the rent that we owe the 'ſquire at Midſummer, I will give him all the labour that he requires in harveſt.

Suſanna. Yes, provided he will but wait ſo long.

Duncan went out to know the ſteward's buſineſs. After he was gone, Suſanna fetched a grievous ſigh, and ſaid, diſcourſing with herſelf, Since he was ſo hard-hearted as to ſeize upon our goods for rent, I cannot ſee or hear him, but my heart revolts at the idea; and at preſent, in my dying moments, he muſt come and cough at our window. But perhaps the hand of God brings him hither as an admonition for me to diſcharge my heart of every thing that looks like malice or ill-will againſt him, and even pray for mercy on his ſoul. Well then, my God, I am content to do ſo. I no longer wiſh him any harm. Forgive

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his ſin as I forgive it. (*She hears the ſteward ſpeaking rather loud.*)

But I hear his voice! he is in a paſſion!—Heaven take pity on us!—O my poor Duncan, it is out of love for me that you have fallen again into his hands. (*She faints, on which the little boy jumps off the bed, and runs to fetch his father.*)

Arthur. O father, father! Quick, come here! My grandmother is dying.

Duncan. O my God!—Permit me, Mr. Steward. I *muſt* go to her aſſiſtance.

The Steward, (*going out.*) Yes indeed! that is very neceſſary. The old Jezebel may die elſe!—I ſhould think it a good riddance of bad rubbiſh.

Luckily Duncan was got too far to hear theſe cruel words. He was already by Suſanna's bed, who ſpeedily recovered from her ſwoon, and thus addreſſed her ſon:

The ſteward came to ſcold you: I could hear him. Doubtleſs he will not grant you time, when once the quarter is turned.

Duncan. No, mother, he did not come for that: he brought me, on the contrary, good news.

Suſanna.

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Suſanna, (pauſing a moment, and appearing to collect her ſpirits.) But is this true, my ſon? or do you only wiſh to comfort me a little? What good news can *he* have for us?

Duncan. It is the 'ſquire's deſign, he ſays, to pull down and rebuild his houſe; at leaſt the front and ſtables; and to employ me at it, with my neighbours. I ſhall have at leaſt, he ſays, ten ſhillings every week.

Suſanna, (with a countenance of joy.) You don't ſay ſo?

Duncan. Yes, certainly; and there will be a matter of two years continual work. Next Monday I begin.

Suſanna. God's providence be praiſed for all things! I ſhall now die happy, ſeeing you enabled to get bread to feed your little ones. Death now has nothing painful in it. Heaven is merciful! may you, Duncan, at all times find it ſo: but tell me, are you not by this convinced of what I have ſo often told you, that the more miſfortunes on one ſide attack us, ſo much more God's grace awaits us on the other?

Duncan. Yes, I am, and ſhall be always. But methinks you ſeem much better. Let

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me quit you for about a minute. I will go fetch a little ſtraw to cover you.

Suſanna. No, no: I feel myſelf much warmer. Rather go with Arthur to neighbour Leonard's. That is what diſturbs me moſt of all. Go, my ſon, I aſk it as a favour.

Hearing this, he did not ſtay a moment in the room, but took his ſon, and going out, gave Margaret a ſign to come and let him ſpeak with her.

Take care of your poor grandmother, ſaid he; and if a fainting fit ſhould ſeize her, come and fetch me from the carpenter's; I ſhall be there.

Leonard was at work, and Gertrude his wife was left all alone at home. She ſaw at once that the father and the child had both been crying.

What is the matter with you, my good friend, ſaid Gertrude, that you have been crying? What is the matter with you, my poor Arthur?

Duncan. Ah, neighbour Gertrude! I am quite unhappy. This poor child of mine who wanted victuals yeſterday, came here and took ſome apples that were yours: he has

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has confeſſed it. My poor mother ſaw him eat them.—Gertrude, ſhe is on her death bed, and deſires you to forgive him. I cannot pay you now the worth of what he took away; but when I go to work, which will be very ſhortly, I will be ſure to ſatisfy you.

Gertrude. O don't ſpeak about it, neighbour: it is a trifle not worth mentioning. And you, my little fellow, promiſe that you will never for the future take what is not your own. (*She kiſſes him.*) You are born of ſuch good people!

Arthur. Oh! I promiſe you I will not: forgive me, Gertrude. I will never ſteal again.

Gertrude. No, never for the future, my good child. You do not know yet how great a ſin it is! When you are hungry, come to me, and if I have a bit of bread myſelf, I will ſhare it with you.

Duncan. Thank ye, neighbour; but I hope, he will never want bread again. I have got a deal of work to do at 'Squire Wealthy's.

Gertrude. Yes, I heard ſo of the ſervants, and was very glad.

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Duncan. I was not near ſo happy when I got it on my own account, as for my mother's ſake. She has at leaſt this comfort on her death-bed. Tell my good friend Leonard that I ſhall work with all my heart to make him compenſation for his loſs.

Gertrude. Do not ſpeak about it, I requeſt you once again. My huſband, I am certain, will not think of any compenſation. He was out of work himſelf, and is to have the wood-work of the job for which you are engaged. But as poor Suſanna is ſo ill, I will go and give her my aſſiſtance.

Gertrude got on her cloak, and then put up ſome pears and apples in a bag, and filled the little fellow's pockets likewiſe; took him by the hand, and bidding poor Duncan go firſt, came after.

They had quickly reached Suſanna's chamber. Gertrude held out her hand, but turned away her face, that ſhe might hide her tears. Suſanna, notwithſtanding, ſaw her, and began as follows:

You are crying then, my dear friend Gertrude?

Gertrude. Indeed I cry to ſee you ſuffer thus.

Suſanna.

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Suſanna. It is, or ought to be, alas! *our* part to cry. Forgive us, I beſeech you. It is the firſt time that ſuch a circumſtance has happened in our houſe.

Gertrude. Why what a ſerious buſineſs you are making of a trifle! It was excuſable in ſuch a child!

Suſanna. But if when older, he ſhould take to be a thief!

Gertrude. No, no; I will anſwer for him, he will be good. My dear Suſanna, you deſerve this recompenſe of heaven for your own honeſty, and all the care that you have taken to bring up your family in virtue. Do you want for any thing? Do not fear to tell me if you do: for every thing that we have is at your ſervice.

Arthur. Yes, indeed; for only ſee what Gertrude has given me! Eat, dear grandmother, do, eat ſome.

Suſanna. No, my child, I cannot: I ſhall never eat again; I feel my ſtrength go from me, and I have almoſt loſt my ſight. My ſon, draw near me: now is come the moment to take leave, and give you my farewel.

Duncan no ſooner heard theſe words, than

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than he was ſeized all over with a ſudden trembling: he took off his hat, fell down upon his knees beſide Suſanna's bed, laid hold with ardour of her hand, then lifted up his eyes to heaven, and would fain have ſpoke, but could not: tears and ſighs prevented him.

Take comfort, ſaid Suſanna; I am going to a happier life than this, and there will wait your coming. When we once meet there, we ſhall not part again.

Duncan in ſome degree recovering, bowed his head, and craved his mother's bleſſing. Bleſs me, ſaid he, my dear mother. I deſire to follow you, when once my children have no further need of my aſſiſtance.

Suſanna opened once again her dying eyes; and with uncommon fervour looking up, pronounced theſe words:

Hear me, O heavenly Father, and vouchſafe the bleſſing of thy grace and favour to my ſon, the only one that I ever had, and whoſe affection was the comfort of my life. Duncan, may God be always with you, and confirm in heaven this bleſſing which I pronounce on you for having fulfilled your duty ſo much like a ſon.

Hear

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Hear me now, my dear Duncan, and carefully obſerve what I ſhall tell you. Bring your children up in virtue, and accuſtom them betimes to a laborious life, that if they ſhould be poor, they may not, when grown up, loſe courage, and be tempted to do wrong. Inſtruct them to place all their truſt in God, and to live good friends with one another; ſo that they may find ſure conſolation amidſt the evils of this life. Forgive the ſteward his injuſtice. When I am buried, pray inform him that I departed without any malice or ill-will againſt him, and beſought of God that he would grant him of his grace to ſee the ſin that he had committed, and repent before he came upon a death-bed. (*She ſtops a little to take breath, and then goes on.*)

Reach me, my good friend, (*to Gertrude*) that book behind you; and my dear Duncan, there is a little leather bag in our great cheſt; I wiſh to have it. Good! (*ſhe takes and claſps them to her heart.*) Theſe are the only treaſures that I have left on earth. And now I ſhould be glad to ſee your children.

They were weeping at a table, whence their

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their father brought them to Suſanna, putting them upon their knees beſide her, while ſhe raiſed herſelf a little, ſo that ſhe might ſee them, and began:

My deareſt children, I am very ſorry that I muſt leave you motherleſs and poor. Think often of me, my ſweet babes. I have nothing that I can give you but this book: it has been frequently my conſolation, and as often will be yours. When you have learned ſufficiently, read in it every evening to your father. It will teach you to be good; and if you are but good, you cannot fail of being happy.

This, Duncan, (*taking out a piece of paper from the leather bag,*) is a certificate which I brought your father of my good behaviour at our marriage. Let it paſs by turns to each of your three daughters, till they marry. It is my laſt requeſt. And as for you, my ſon, I have nothing in the world to give you in remembrance of me; but the comfort is, you want none. You will not forget me, I am certain.

Gertrude, ſhall I requeſt one other favour of you, after having pardoned Arthur? When I am dead, ſee now and then to theſe

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theſe poor children.—They have no one friend.—I recommend you in particular my poor dear Lucy.—She is the youngeſt of the three.—Where is ſhe?—I can hardly ſee.——(*She ſtretches out her arm with difficulty.*)

Conduct my hand, and let me touch her.—O my children! (*ſhe dies.*)

After a moment's ſilence, Duncan ſuppoſing her to be fallen aſleep, ſaid ſoftly to his children, Riſe, and do not diſturb her ſlumber. Might ſhe but recover, after having had this unexpected reſt! But Gertrude ſaw plainly that ſhe was dead, and gave Duncan to underſtand as much. What was his diſtraction then, and that of his helpleſs family? How they wept and wrung their hands! How they beat upon their breaſts, and tore their hair up by the roots for anguiſh!

Gertrude, as well as ſhe was able, comforted their ſorrow, and repeated to Duncan Suſanna's parting words, which in his grief he had not heard diſtinctly.

She began that very day to ſhew how much ſhe valued the deceaſed, by complying with her laſt wiſh. The little orphans being

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being brought up with her own dear children, had the ſame inſtruction; and improving by it, grew in time to be a pattern for the village; and particularly Arthur, continually having in remembrance his firſt fault, became remarkable in time for his fidelity and honeſt dealing.

PASCAL.

MR. Dawkins was accuſtomed every Saturday to pay his only ſon, a little boy whoſe name was Paſcal, an allowance, ſuch as was ſufficient to procure him, the week through, thoſe little pleaſures and enjoyments which children of his age ſo naturally purſue. No leſs confident than generous, he never looked for an account from Paſcal of the way in which he laid out what he gave him. He ſuppoſed his principles to be ſuch, that he would not abuſe his bounty, but remember the inſtruction which he had ſo frequently given him upon the ſubject. But what lamenta-

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ble consequences did this too blind credulity produce?

For hardly ever had he touched his weekly payment, but he ran that moment to a shop hard by, and stuffed himself with pastry and nice things. His purse, in this first onset, underwent so great a diminution, that a very little the next day was sufficient to exhaust it totally: and during the last part of every week, he never had a farthing to regale himself withal; yet he did not, upon that account, the less hanker after the same delicacies. Wherefore being resolved to gratify his palate, he prevailed upon the pastry-cook, at first, to give him credit; but when afterwards he found that the boy's allowance was never applied to pay off these arrears, while on the other hand the debt increased, he saw that it was prudent to give in his bill to Mr. Dawkins. Mr. Dawkins was extremely angry with the tradesman, reprimanded his improper conduct, and forbade not only *him*, but every tradesman round about, to let his son have any thing for which he could not pay on the spot. This might have been supposed a good precaution; and accordingly he thought

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thought it could not but become a check on Paſcal's gluttony; whereas it only irritated matters, and the boy, as we ſhall ſee, at any riſque reſolved to gratify his palate.

Paſcal's chamber was contiguous to his father's. After having noticed when his father generally ſlept the ſoundeſt, he once got up ſoftly, came into his room, and feeling for his breeches, took out half a crown. Emboldened by this fatal ſucceſs, he frequently repeated his offence, and for a time without detection: but there cannot be a crime, however ſecretly committed, which does not come to light at laſt.

It chanced that Mr. Dawkins, ſome time after Paſcal's firſt offence in that way, had a law-ſuit on the following day to be decided. Having thought upon it waking, it is not to be wondered at that it ſhould take up his attention after he was gone to reſt. In fact, he lay quite ſilent, ruminating on the affair, when Paſcal, thinking him aſleep, got up as he was wont to do. Unhappily for him, the moon threw light enough into the chamber, that a perſon coming in might eaſily be ſeen. Accordingly let any one imagine if he can, what Mr.

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Mr. Dawkins muſt have felt, beholding his own ſon thus come and rob him! He for that time ſtifled his reſentment; but before the thief could quit his chamber in the morning, he got up, went to him, and found means to turn the converſation into ſuch a channel, as to aſk him how much he intended to lay out that day of his allowance. Nothing, anſwered Paſcal. I have given all my laſt week's money to a poor man in the neighbourhood, and muſt deny myſelf a little till next Saturday.

His father could not poſſibly reſtrain his indignation any longer, hearing ſo deteſtable a lie come from him. He ſprung forward, ſeized him by the collar, for by this time he was dreſſed, and found five ſhillings in his pocket, which was what he had ſtolen from his father. In proportion as he had till now been tender and indulgent to his ſon, ſo much the greater was his ſeverity and rigour on this occaſion; for his reprimands were only the preamble to a harſher treatment, and the wretched Paſcal was obliged to keep his bed for many days, in conſequence of the correction that he received.

How

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How difficult it is to extirpate a vice which has once taken root within us! Paſcal was not cured by this correction. Mr. Dawkins left the key of his bureau one evening in the lock, and Paſcal took a model of the wards, and got another made at the ſmith's. This gave him a convenient opportunity to rob his father whenever he pleaſed: who, as he uſually kept a great deal of caſh by him, and as Paſcal was more cunning than to take too much at once, ſuſpected nothing of the affair. He was now fifteen years of age, and could diſſemble ſo well, that his parents thought him quite reformed, till his hypocriſy was accidentally diſcovered.

His father had received a piece of foreign coin, among other monies, which he ſoon remarked, and put it up in the bureau. This piece fell into Paſcal's hands that very night, and Mr. Dawkins miſſing it the next morning, could not but bethink himſelf of Paſcal's former inclinations, and ſuſpect him. He reſolved to ſatisfy himſelf that moment, and examining his pockets, found the piece of money that he had loſt,

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loſt, together with the key, by means of which he had obtained it.

But Paſcal by this time was too big for ſuch correction as he had received before, and therefore Mr. Dawkins contented himſelf with ſeverely upbraiding him for the preſent, and threatening to withdraw the benefits of his affection from him. He conſulted a few faithful friends that he had, upon the treatment proper to be ſhewn him: their opinion was in general, that the harſheſt method of proceeding would moſt tend to his amendment, and adviſed his being ſent to ſchool in Yorkſhire, where for years he might not ſee his family, but be ſubjected to the rigorous diſcipline and homely fare peculiar to ſuch inſtitutions, and of courſe have leiſure to repent of his enormity, and be accuſtomed to a frugal way of life. This was their counſel; but the combats of paternal love in Mr. Dawkins's boſom, which was very far, as yet, from being quite extinct, would not permit him to purſue their ſalutary admonition; he inclined to ſomething of a gentler nature, and in grief of heart, and as the only moderate method which he could deviſe

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deviſe to preſerve him from deſtruction, ſent that very day to Briſtol for a friend of his, who kept a boarding-ſchool, to whoſe attention he configned, upon the day of his arrival, this unworthy ſon, with directions to let him have no other money than was abſolutely neceſſary for his wants. His friend ſet off on his return immediately, and Paſcal with him.

This was a precaution; but it came, alas! too late: the youth's principles were utterly corrupted. His tutor's table was plain, though very plentiful; for which reaſon Paſcal would go out, and at a tavern gratify his palate with the choiceſt wines and viands, for which he eaſily got credit, as his hoſt took care to make enquiry, firſt of all, into his father's circumſtances, who, he found, was very rich: nor did he ſtop at this; for to ſupply that want of money which his tutor would not, he began to play, and practiſed every ſpecies of deception at a gaming-houſe hard by.

God's providence, as if it interfered particularly to reform him, puniſhed all his vices on the ſpot. Three gamblers, his companions,

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companions, who detected him endeavouring to deceive them with a pack of cards, that he had beforehand ſorted for the purpoſe, fell upon him unawares, and ſo rough were the effects of their vengeance, that Paſcal was almoſt drubbed to death upon the ſpot.

He was carried home with ſcarce the leaſt remains of life, and put to bed. His tutor ran to ſee him, and afforded all the ſuccour and aſſiſtance in his power. He waited till he ſaw him almoſt re-eſtabliſhed, to impart ſuch counſel as might poſſibly affect him; which he did with all the ſoftneſs poſſible, and pointed out the horrors into which he was plunging himſelf. Miſerable youth! ſaid the tutor, what can have induced you to exceſſes ſo diſgraceful! You diſhonour, by your crimes, a name which the probity of thoſe before you had exalted, and made really reſpectable. You rob your tender parents of thoſe hopes which they indulged when firſt they laid the groundwork of your education. When the youth of your acquaintance, who now conſecrate that time to ſtudy which you conſume in ſcandalous exceſſes, ſhall be ſought out by

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their country and employed in elevated ſtations, you will be conſidered as an abject, dangerous character. You will be baniſhed from all company that have the leaſt regard or value for their honour, and the meaneſt claſs of men will ſcorn you.

Paſcal was at firſt affected with this leſſon. He broke off all commerce with his partners; he was ſatisfied with his preceptor's table-fare; and ſeemed as if beginning to imagine that ſtudy had ſome charms to pleaſe him. But this diſpoſition was ſoon done away, and by degrees he relapſed into his former way of life. He ſold his books; his watch and clothes went afterwards; and he contrived to ſtrip himſelf of his apparel ſo completely, that he could not ſtir abroad.

On which his creditors came all at once upon him, and receiving a refuſal from the tutor to diſcharge the young man's debts and ſatiate their avidity, they wrote letters to the father, threatening to arreſt him if they were not paid. Let Paſcal's ſituation now be imagined. Overwhelmed with the reproaches of his creditors, the indignation of his tutor, the contempt of thoſe who waited on him, and his own remorſe, he

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had moreover to dread the malediction of his parents. He was ſenſible that he had ſo much neglected to improve his underſtanding, that he could not find the leaſt reſources againſt want in any calling or profeſſion. He began to think his ſituation deſperate. A whole day he paſſed in his apartment violently agitated; every now and then he wrung his hands, tore his hair, and curſed his vices: but at night, ſtill borne away by his depravity, he went from home to ſpend the little money that he had left, in a tavern.

Accident that evening threw two men into his company who were employed to raiſe recruits for India. They remarked upon his countenance the embarraſſment with which his ſoul was agitated, winked to one another, and began to talk of India. They deſcribed the beauty of the country, and what pay was given to the ſoldiery. They ſpoke of the advantages that a youth of family might meet with there, and what a probability there was, that ſuch a one might make his fortune; nay, they went ſo far as to aſſert that, many, to their knowledge, had from private ſoldiers been made officers, and married wealthy widows.

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Paſcal heard this converſation with avidity, joined in the diſcourſe, and enquired if it was difficult to be enliſted with theſe ſoldiers. If you wiſh to enliſt, ſaid they, we can oblige you, though we have more recruits by many than we want; but you, by your appearance, ſeem to claim the preference; and thereupon they offered him five guineas if he would enter.

After ſome ſlight ſtruggles, Paſcal took the guineas, and enliſted. The remainder of the night he ſpent in drinking; and when morning came, was ſent to learn his exerciſe. He found himſelf ſurrounded by a ſet of aukward ruſtics, runaway apprentices, notorious beggars, and convicted thieves, who had enliſted to eſcape the gallows. He was under the tuition of a ſurly corporal, who loaded him from time to time with curſes, and ſeverely caned him, when he could not comprehend his meaning.

Paſcal's miſery went on from day to day encreaſing. All the money that he had lately touched at parting with his freedom, was already gone in riot. He had nothing to ſubſiſt on but the coarſe proviſion granted by the company to keep their new recruits together. Lubberkin, who had been a ſwine-

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ſwine-herd, and was then his comrade, was much better off. He had been always uſed to live on oaten bread, and therefore thought himſelf a prince, when he could get a bit of half-baked meat. But what were Paſcal's feelings, when, partaking of ſuch coarſe proviſions, he reflected on the delicacies of his former repaſts!

Some days after came an order for the ſoldiers to embark. Paſcal heard this news with much more ſatisfaction than the people round about him thought he would have teſtified. If once you get to India, ſaid he to himſelf, as you are young, and of a likely figure, you will make your fortune, as a multitude of Engliſhmen have done before you.

In the midſt of all theſe brilliant proſpects, Paſcal went on board the veſſel deſtined to tranſport him and his comrades. He drank down a glaſs or two of brandy at the moment of embarking, and they ſerved to warm his head, and to make him utterly forget his parents. He went off with mad huzzas. But then the joy with which he uttered theſe huzzas, continued hardly longer than the drunkenneſs that cauſed

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them. Thoſe on board who were now for the firſt time in their life at ſea, began to feel a death-like ſickneſs. Paſcal, whoſe intemperance had hurt his inſide much, endured a great deal more than any other. He was ſeveral days inſenſible, and nothing ſtaid upon his ſtomach. Even the ſight of food diſguſted him; and when at laſt he grew a little better, and was hungry, mouldy peaſe, ſalt beef, and biſcuits full of maggots, were the only victuals that he could procure. When he firſt ſet ſail, the ſoldiers had a pint of beer each allowed them; but by degrees they were deprived of this indulgence, and compelled to put up with a bare ſufficiency of water, and even this they were obliged to ſtrain before they could drink it.

After ſix long months inceſſant ſuffering, during all which time they were in fear of continual ſhipwreck, they arrived in India, wearied out with watchings for the moſt part, and a dreadful ſcurvy. Paſcal was marched up the country, with his comrades, to the army: but his heart, embittered by the horror of his ſituation, was inſenſible of any thing like goodneſs.

His

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His abandoned courſe of life, the crimes that he was inceſſantly committing, and his numberleſs deſertions, frequently ſubjected him to puniſhment. He was determined, if he could, to quit theſe regions, watched his opportunity, and ſtealing on board a veſſel bound to England, hid himſelf below till it had ſailed; nor did he quit his hiding-place, till the ſhip was a great way out to ſea: he then came forth, and being brought before the captain, promiſed to work his paſſage to England; which the captain in the end accepted, as the veſſel was in want of men.

What, in the interim, was become of his unhappy parents? They alas! ſtill lived, if people may be ſaid to live whoſe ſad days are ſpent in anguiſh and deſpair. The crimes which their ſon had committed, and with which the neighbourhood all around them rung, had forced them to renounce their place of habitation, and go down and live in Suſſex, in a ſolitary quarter near the ſea.

A ſhort time after they were ſettled here, the ſhip, in which Paſcal was, arrived on that very part of the coaſt where they had

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fixed their retirement. For while they were yet a little way out at ſea, Paſcal, a thorough graduate in vice, had conſpired with ten or twelve deſperate fellows of the crew, to murder every one on board who would not join in their conſpiracy, and ſo obtain poſſeſſion of the ſhip. They executed their infernal purpoſe; and ſoon after running the veſſel aſhore, they hoiſted out their boat at night, that they might come on ſhore, and pillage the inhabitants.

That very night the unhappy Mr. Dawkins in his houſe was up, and watching by his wife's ſick bed. Her grief for Paſcal's wretched fortune had long preyed upon her conſtitution; and by this time, after having ſuffered grievouſly, ſhe felt the agonies of death upon her. In the intervals of her delirium, ſhe called out for Paſcal: Where, where are you? ſaid the dying mother—Come, that I may preſs you to my heart, and pardon you before I die. At this inſtant the door was ſuddenly burſt open, and ten villains ruſhed into the dwelling. Paſcal, with a hatchet in his hand, was firſt, and led them on. The father came to meet them with a candle; but before his ſon could

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could recollect him——The remainder is too horrid to relate: ſuffice it, that Paſcal and his gang were apprehended on the ſpot, and ſuffered at the gallows.

Children, if when you have read this ſtory, you dare think of giving way to any vice whatſoever, tremble at the poſſibility of your becoming criminal by degrees, and ending, like Paſcal, with the crime of parricide!

GEORGE.

LITTLE George was fond of walking in a wood that bordered on his father's garden: Now this wood was formed of little trees, placed very near each other, and two paths conducting through it, croſſed each other. One day, as he was ſauntering up and down, he wiſhed to reſt himſelf a little, with his back ſupported by a tree, whoſe ſtem was yet quite ſlender, and which therefore ſhook thro' all its branches, when his body firſt touched it. As it

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chanced, the ruſtling frighted a poor little bird, which flew out of a neighbouring buſh, and ſoon diſappeared.

George ſaw it fly away, and was vexed. He fixed his eye upon the buſh, to ſee if it would not return: and while he was attentively conſidering it, he thought he ſaw among the branches, at a ſpot where they were twiſted into one another, ſomething like a tuft of hay. His curioſity induced him to draw nearer and examine it. He found this tuft of hay was hollow like a porringer: he thruſt aſide the branches, and ſaw certain little balls within it, of an oval ſhape, and ſpotted. They were placed beſide each other, on a layer of graſs. Surely this, ſaid George, muſt be what I have heard ſome people call a bird's-neſt; and the balls are eggs. They are indeed quite little, but the bird is not ſo big as any of our hens.

It was his firſt deſign to carry away the neſt; however, upon ſecond thoughts, he was contented with one egg; and having taken it, ran home. He met his ſiſter by the way, and thus addreſſed her: "See this little egg. I found it in a neſt; there were

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were five others with it." "Let me have it in my hand;" ſaid George's ſiſter. She examined it, returned it to her brother, and then aſked a ſecond time to have it. In the end, they rolled it up and down a table, juſt as if it were a ball. One ſhoved it one way, and the other puſhed it another way, till, in the midſt of their diverſion, it fell down and broke. They cried, and mutually accuſed each other as the cauſe of ſuch a great misfortune.

As it chanced, their mother heard them thus complaining; and not knowing why they wept, approached to conſole them. Both began at once. She heard their different ſtories, and then taking each affectionately by the hand, conducted them to a tree that overſhadowed a green bank, on which ſhe bid them both ſit down.

Be comforted, dear children, ſaid ſhe. That you have broke the egg between you both, is truly a misfortune; but it is one, however, that ſhould not much grieve you, ſince you did not mean to do ſo. I might notwithſtanding blame you. George, with juſtice, for the act of having brought it from the neſt. You muſt have ſeen hen's

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eggs diſpoſed of in a ſort of neſt. The mother ſits upon them, warms and animates them. Chickens in about three weeks are formed within them, and they pierce the ſhell. In ſome few days, they come and feed out of your hand. This egg would alſo have become a ſort of chick, which you have killed by bringing it away. The bird that flew out of the buſh as you inform me, was the mother. Doubtleſs ſhe will come again, and very ſhortly, to her neſt: ſhe will perceive that one egg is wanting, and perhaps forſake it altogether. This is frequently the caſe.

Perhaps this loſs of but a ſingle egg, informs them that their aſylum is diſcovered; they have every thing to fear from our violence; they gueſs that when their little ones are hatched, he who has already robbed them, will return and ſeize upon their tender family. If then this neſt which you have been thus robbing, as I muſt call it, ſhould be totally abandoned,—tell me, would you not be ſorry for it?

Yes, mama, indeed, replied little George; and I am ſorry that I meddled with the egg; but then I did not know a ſyllable of

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of what you have been telling us; and thought no harm in bringing it to ſhew my ſiſter, which is all that I meant to do.

My little fellow, I can eaſily believe you, ſaid the mother. Should you do bad actions for the pleaſure which ſome ſuppoſe there is in doing them, you would in that caſe have a very wicked heart, and I ſhould be quite ſorry that I had ſuch a ſon: but that I do not fear; for, on the contrary, I know you to be a very good boy.

Mama, ſaid the little girl, the neſt, for I have ſeen it, out of which my brother took this egg, does not reſemble in the leaſt thoſe ſwallows neſts that we ſee about our out-houſe roof. My dear child, ſaid the mother, every neſt is not alike; nor yet is every bird alike; for ſome are great, and others little. Some are never known to perch on trees, and others live at all times in them. Some are large and ſtupid, others ſmall and full of induſtry and cunning. Some are beautiful beyond deſcription in their plumage, which has half a dozen colours; others are of one dull colour. Some ſubſiſt on fruits, ſome go in queſt of in-

ſects,

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ſects, and a multitude of others ſeize on ſmaller birds, and eat them.

Ah the wicked creatures! cried the little girl. I do not love theſe laſt, and ſhould be glad to ſpoil their neſts. So too would many others, ſaid her mama; and therefore thoſe great birds that conſtantly devour the leſs, conſtruct their neſts in places where they cannot eaſily be come at; as for inſtance in woods, and in the holes of rocks, where men appear but very ſeldom; and at heights beyond our reach, however ſkilful we may be in climbing.

Therefore, deareſt children, ſince theſe birds are greatly different from each other, not only in ſize, but alſo in their way of life, and in the colour of their feathers, it is but reaſonable that they ſhould have neſts different alſo from each other. Thus the lark which never lives in any tree, but ſings, as you have heard her, mounting in the air; conſtructs her neſt upon the ground; the ſwallow builds about the roofs of houſes, under what we call the eaves; the owl, which people only hear by night, ſeeks out old ruinous buildings, or ſome hollow tree to put her eggs in; and the eagle which I ſhewed

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ſhewed you yeſterday flying about the clouds and nearly out of ſight, brings forth her young ones in the cliffs of craggy rocks. Thoſe that live round about us, make their neſts in trees and hedges. Thoſe that love the water, and who find their food therein, build theirs among thoſe ruſhes that grow near it, upon little iſlands, and at times upon the ſhore itſelf.

If one of theſe fine days we go into the little valley at the bottom of our large meadow, we ſhall ſee a number of theſe little creatures buſy in ſelecting the materials they compoſe their neſts of. One you will obſerve employed in carrying off a wheaten ſtraw; another will have in his beak ſome wool or feathers; or dried leaves; and very probably a third, ſome moſs. The ſwallow, by the border of a ſtream, you will take notice, moiſtens with the water which he takes up in his beak, a little bit of earth with which he builds his habitation. Such materials as are very coarſe and ſolid, he will take to form the outſide of his neſt, but lines it with the ſofteſt and the warmeſt. Nay, there are ſome birds who pull out

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out their own feathers to make up a more comfortable bed for their little ones.

They conſtruct large neſts, or ſmall ones, in proportion to the number of young birds that they are to hatch within them. Some will hang their neſts up by a ſort of thread, which thread they have the ſkill to form of flax, of different ſorts of weeds, and of the webs of ſpiders. Others place it in the middle of a ſoft and gluey ſubſtance, whereunto they carefully ſtick many feathers. All do every thing in their power to make it ſtrong and ſolid, and ſecure themſelves from every enemy that inſtinct bids them fear, by reſorting to retired and ſolitary places.

There they lay their eggs. The mother, and at times the father, ſits upon them in the neſt, with admirable perſeverance. They are taught by nature, that the warmth proceeding from their body, when they ſit upon theſe eggs, puts every thing within them into motion, and produces little creatures, which at laſt are ſtrong enough to break the ſhell that holds them, and come forth.

You

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You muſt have often ſeen a fly in winter, to appearance dead. You took it in your hands, and through the warmth proceeding from them, it was brought to life. It is nearly thus with birds: the perſeverance of the parents, when they brood upon their eggs, converts them into living creatures.

When the mother ſits alone, the cock will bring her victuals, and ſit by to pleaſe her with his muſic. When the little ones are once alive, they help them to get clear of their confinement in the egg. Their diligence is now redoubled; they do every thing to nouriſh and defend them, and are conſtantly employed in this intereſting office. They go very far indeed to get their food, and make an equal diſtribution of it, every one receiving in its turn what they have brought. As long as they are very young and helpleſs, they contrive to bring them victuals ſuited to their delicacy; but when once they are grown ſtrong and older, they provide them food more ſolid.

There is one, and that a very large one, called a *pelican*, who being forced to go great diſtances in queſt of victuals for her young,

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young ones, is provided with a ſort of bag. She fills it with ſuch aliments as ſhe is ſenſible they love: ſhe warms what ſhe procures, and renders it by ſuch means fitter for their tender ſtomachs: ſhe returns, and empties it before them.

In this ſtate of being parents, they appear as if forgetting that they want food themſelves, and only think upon their little family. If either rain or tempeſts come, they hurry to their neſts, and cover it as well as they are able with their outſtretched wings, ſo keeping out the wind and water that might hurt the brood. All night too, they are buſy in the work of cheriſhing the little things. The fearfulleſt among them, that will fly away if they but hear the ſlighteſt noiſe, and tremble at the leaſt degree of danger, know not what fear is when they have once a family to protect, but become courageous and intrepid: as for inſtance, the common hen. As great a coward as ſhe is when by herſelf, ſhe grows a very heroine, a pattern of courage, when ſhe has young ones to defend from danger. She attacks the greateſt dog, and will

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will not even fear a man, who ſhould attempt to take them from her.

So too do the little birds endeavour to defend their young, when any one would ſteal or hurt them. They will flutter round the neſt, will ſeem to call out for aſſiſtance, will attack the invader, and purſue him. If their young be ſhut within a cage, they will continue to come regularly, and at all times feed them. Frequently the mother will prefer confinement with them, rather than be freed from the neceſſity of tending on them, and will never quit the little creatures.

Poor dear birds! cried out the children, how we ſhall love you for the future! We will never be ſo cruel as to do you any harm. We will only look at your neſts; and be contented to gaze on you, while employed in the delightful taſk of tending on your young, and to contemplate your little family, all flying round their parents.—Yes, dear children, ſaid the mother, thus it ſhould be. Keep your reſolution as you ought, and I ſhall love you for it. Never injure any creature, or occaſion it the leaſt degree of pain for pleaſure's

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ſure's ſake: on ſaying which, the mother went in doors, embracing her dear children, who were highly pleaſed with what they had juſt learnt.

JAMES.

A Merchant, whom we ſhall here call James, had but a ſingle ſon, whom he loved very tenderly. He was far from having a bad heart, his countenance was rather pretty, and his friends would all have been very fond of him, but that he ſhewed in every action, a covetous propenſity which ſhocked as many as had opportunities of knowing him. This covetouſneſs made him violently wiſh for every thing poſſeſſed by others. It even wrought upon him to ſo great a pitch, that he would conſtantly refuſe to ſhare among his play-mates, or even ſhew them what he had himſelf. His father, who was a man of very amiable character, wiſhed greatly to reform him of this fault, but never had been able. All that

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that he could do, was to ſhew how much it grieved him.

Little James, however, loſt a great deal more by his propenſity to avarice, than he had ever gained thereby. Did any body give him ſweetmeats? He would get away and ſwallow them like a churl, in ſome dark corner of the houſe, leſt any one ſhould aſk a part. Whilſt he was hid, his father would give twice as much to his companions: he perceived it, and no longer hid himſelf; but as ſoon as he fixed his eye on ſweetmeats, or nice things, he appeared as if he would devour them: he purſued the hands of thoſe who held them, and his own were in a ſort of convulſion.

Mr. James, as we have ſaid before, was very much afflicted in perceiving this; and that he might not be afflicted further than was abſolutely neceſſary, he ceaſed to give him any nice things, or even have them in the houſe.

Had little James a wind-mill, boat, or other play-thing, he would never ſhew it: he concealed himſelf in the enjoyment of it, and was never happy. Or, ſuppoſing he had any ſort of fruit, he would not ſhare it with

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with his play-fellows, but devour it all alone, refuſing even thoſe whom he happened to love moſt, and ſuch as might be hungry; therefore none among them would in turn ſhare any thing with him: they were indeed beſt pleaſed to leave his company; they never wiſhed to have it. When he chanced to be in a quarrel, no one took his part, not even when they knew him in the right; but being in the wrong, all joined againſt him.

As it chanced, one day a little boy obſerved him with an apple in his hand, and gave him by ſurpriſe a knock upon the elbow, ſo that he was forced to let the apple go. He picked it up, however; but that moment, to avenge himſelf upon the boy that had contrived to play him ſuch a trick, he ſet off to catch him, but in running fell into a ſlough, and was almoſt ſuffocated in the mud. He did his utmoſt to get out, but could not: he attempted, but without ſucceeding, to prevail upon his playmates to hold out their hands and help him; he obſerved that they only laughed at his diſtreſs, and, in deriſion, danced about the ſlough, from which he could not extricate himſelf.

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himself. Their cry was, "Let *him* now hold out a hand to whom you have been generous! Ask assistance of those whom you have obliged!" However, at length, one, more compassionate, came forward, and approaching where he stood, stretched forth his hand, and got him out in safety.—He shook off the mud that covered him, and then, to shew his gratitude to that good little boy who had delivered him, bit off about a quarter from the apple which had caused this sad disaster, and which still he held fast in his hand, and would fain have made him take it.

The good little boy, disgusted with the gift, and way of giving, took the morsel, but to fling it in his face; and this was, as it were, a signal for the rest to scout him. They pursued our little James quite home, and hallooed all the way.

He was not void of feeling, and had never yet been hooted: he was therefore thrown into a thinking humour, and did not afterwards come much into his father's presence, but confined himself to his apartment for above ten days together. There he asked himself, what cause his

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his playmates had to hate him. He addreſſed himſelf as follows: "For what reaſon has my little neighbour, he that even held me out his hand when I was in the mire, ſuch a number of good friends? Why is he loved ſo much, while I have not a ſingle little boy that will ſeek my company, nor be my friend, nor conſole me in affliction?"—He diſcovered very ſoon the reaſon, by comparing the good boy's behaviour with his own. He recollected that he was happy to do any one a pleaſure; that whenever he had any fruit, confectionary, or the like, he felt more joy in ſharing it with his companion, than in eating it himſelf, and had no ſort of amuſement which he did not wiſh all his little acquaintances to ſhare. He ſaw plainly, on this view of things, how much he differed from this little boy in diſpoſition. He reſolved at laſt to imitate him, and went out next day with both his pockets full of fruit, ran up to every boy that he met, and gave him ſome: he could not all at once, however, give up *ſelf*, but left a little in his pocket, which he eat in private when got home.

Although

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Although his liberality was not perfect, he found occaſion to be ſatisfied with the effect of it, ſince his companions now, on their part, were more generous to him: they ſhewed themſelves more merry in his company; they took him as a partner in their little paſtimes; they divided with him what they had, and he went home quite pleaſed.

Upon the morrow he did ſtill a great deal better. When he met his little friends, he did not fail to pull out of his pocket every thing that he had, divided it into as many ſhares as there were mouths to eat it, and reſerved a ſhare no more than equal for himſelf. Indeed, if there was any difference, ſome thought that he took the leaſt, and he was much more ſatisfied that day than the preceding.

By degrees he was habituated to be generous, and even to ſuch as he could ſee had nothing in return to give: I mean to ſuch as were in want. Of courſe he was beloved: whenever his companions ſaw him, they ran up to meet him with the greateſt joy upon their countenances; they

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were glad to give him pleaſure. In ſhort, he was now quite happy.

Such a change could not eſcape his father's obſervation, and it gave him real ſatisfaction. He affectionately took him in his arms, refuſed him nothing for the time to come, and even ſought occaſions to delight him. Every day little James diſcerned, that to be happy, it was abſolutely neceſſary that he ſhould not deſire a ſolitary happineſs, but wiſh to make thoſe round about him happy likewiſe.

THE

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Cook Sc

The Fire

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THE FIRE.

A DRAMA, in ONE ACT.

CHARACTERS.

MR. and MRS. CRESWELL.	
ADRIAN, JULIA,	their Children.
TRUEMAN,	a Farmer.
JANE,	his Wife.
LUBBIN, SUKEY,	their Children.
GILBERT,	Mr. Creſwell's Groom.

SCENE. *The entrance of a village, in the environs of London, in a part of which, contiguous to the fields, appears a fire. On one ſide is a farm-houſe with a pump, and on the other ſide a hill.*

SCENE I.

Adrian, (running by a path that conducts round the hill. His clothes and hair out of order. He looks back and ſees the fire burſt forth with double fury.)

O Heaven! O Heaven! all burning ſtill! What volumes of thick ſmoke and flame! What is now become of my

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papa, mama, and ſiſter? Am I an unhappy orphan? Heaven take pity on me, and let them be ſafe; for they are more to me than all the world beſide—Without them what ſhould I do? (*Oppreſſed with grief and wearineſs, he leans againſt a tree. The farm-houſe door now opens, and the little peaſant Lubbin, who has his breakfaſt in his hand, comes out.*)

Lubbin, (*without obſerving Adrian.*) So it does not finiſh then, this fire? What could poſſeſs my father to go poking with his horſes, juſt into the middle of it! But the ſun is now riſing. He will ſoon be back. I will ſit down here, and wait till he returns.

(*He goes to ſit down by the tree, and ſees little Adrian.*) Hey! hey! who is here? a fine young gentleman! what brings you out ſo early, my pretty maſter?

Adrian. Ah! my little friend, I neither know at preſent where I am, nor whither I am going.

Lubbin. How! mayhap you live in town? and very likely where the fire is?

Adrian. Yes, indeed, I have eſcaped I cannot well tell you in what manner.

Lubbin.

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Lubbin. Is it your houſe that is on fire?

Adrian. It was in our ſtreet that the fire broke out; I was in bed, and ſleeping very ſoundly. My papa ran up to ſnatch me out of bed: the ſervants dreſſed me in a hurry, and one carried me directly through the fire, which blazed all round us as we went forward.

Lubbin. Poor dear little fellow!

(*Somebody from the houſe cries out,* Lubbin! Lubbin! *But Lubbin is liſtening to little Adrian, with ſo much attention, that he does not hear it.*)

SCENE II.

Adrian, Lubbin, Jane, Sukey.

Jane, (*to Sukey, at the entrance.*) I hope, he is not gone away, to ſee the fire: I think, it is enough to be terrified for his father's danger.

Sukey. No, no, mother: here he is. Ah! ha! he is ſpeaking to a little gentleman.

Jane, (*to Lubbin.*) Why did not you anſwer, when I called you?

Lubbin. Have you been calling me? I

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did not hear you. I was liſtening to this poor boy here.

Sukey. Poor! What has happened to him?

Lubbin. He was like to have been burnt alive. His houſe was all in flames, he tells me, when they got him out.

Jane. How pale the poor child is! And how did they contrive to ſave you, my little maſter?

Adrian. Our helper was bid to take me to the village where I had been nurſed; ſo he put me on his ſhoulders; but they ſtopped him in the ſtreet, wanting hands to work. I fell a crying, when I ſaw myſelf alone; at which, a good old woman took me by the hand, and brought me out of town, directing me to walk ſtrait forward, till I ſaw a village; ſo I followed her advice, and here I am.

Jane. And can you tell me what your nurſe's name was?

Adrian. No, not now; but I can recollect I uſed to call my little foſter-ſiſter, Sukey.

Sukey, (*earneſtly*) If this little boy ſhould be Adrian, mother!

Adrian.

Adrian. Yes! yes! that is my name!

Jane. What, Adrian, Mr. Creſwell's ſon?

Adrian. O, my good dear nurſe! I recollect you now. And this is Sukey, and this, Lubbin. (*They embrace each other.*)

Jane, (*kiſſing Adrian.*) How happy am I now! I thought of nothing but my poor dear little Adrian, ſince this fire began. My huſband is gone to give you all the aſſiſtance that he can.——But how tall he is grown! ſhould you have recollected him! I think not, Sukey.

Sukey. Not immediately, indeed; but when I ſaw him firſt, methought I felt my heart beat towards him. It is a long time now ſince we were laſt together.

Adrian. I have been a great way off, at ſchool, and came only three days ſince, for the holidays. Had I remained at ſchool, I ſhould, at leaſt at preſent, have known nothing of this day's misfortune. O, papa! mama! O ſiſter!

Jane. Poor dear child! there is no cauſe to make yourſelf uneaſy. On the firſt alarm of fire, ſo near your quarter of the town, my huſband inſtantly ſet out, to ſee if he could be of any uſe. I know him. Your

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papa, mama, and ſiſter, will be ſafe, if mortal man can ſave them. But, my lovely Adrian, you have been up and running theſe two hours at leaſt, and muſt be hungry. Will you eat a little?

Lubbin. Look ye, maſter, here is a Yorkſhire cake and butter. Take it!

Adrian. Maſter! You were uſed to call me Adrian, and not maſter.

Lubbin, (*embracing him.*) Well then, Adrian, take my breakfaſt.

Sukey. Or ſtay, Adrian, you muſt certainly be dry as well as hungry. I will go fetch my milk porridge. I was putting in the bread——

Adrian. No, no, my good friends. I cannot have any appetite, till I ſee my dear papa, mama, and ſiſter. I will return and ſeek them.

Jane. Do you think of what you are ſaying? Run into the flames!

Adrian. I left them in the flames; but it was againſt my will. I did not like to part with them, but my papa would have it ſo: he threatened me, and in an angry tone bid Gilbert pay no heed to my reſiſtance. I was forced at laſt to yield, for fear of putting

putting him into a greater paſſion. I cannot hold out any longer, but, whatever be the danger, I muſt go back to find if they are in ſafety.

Jane. I cannot let you go, that is certain. Come into the houſe with us.

Adrian. You have a houſe then. Alas! I have none.

Jane. And is not our houſe yours? I fed you with my milk, and ſurely then I cannot deny you bread. (*She forces him in, and ſays to Lubbin*) Take care, and ſtay you here, that you may ſee your father the ſooner, and let us know of his coming.—But do not run to ſee the fire. Remember, I forbid you that.

Lubbin, (*alone.*) And yet I have half a mind to do ſo. What a charming bonfire it muſt make! I do not ſee clearly, but I think that ſteeple is down, that had the golden dragon on the top. There is many a poor ſoul, by this, burnt out of houſe and home! I pity them, and yet they muſt not hinder me from finiſhing my breakfaſt:—(*To Sukey, who re-enters with a tumbler.*) Well now, ſiſter, you are a dear good girl, indeed, to bring me drink ſo kindly.

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Sukey. Oh! it is not for you. I am come to get a glass of water for poor Adrian. He will have neither milk, nor ale, nor wine. "My dear papa, (says he,) mama, and sister, very likely, are at present dry and hungry, and shall I have such nice things? No, no, indeed: let me have therefore nothing but a little water; that will serve me well enough, especially as I am so thirsty."

Lubbin. I must own, however, it is something comical, that Adrian should refuse a drop of any thing that is good, because he cannot get tidings of his parents.

Sukey. Oh! I know you well enough! Your sister might be burnt alive, and you! not eat a mouthful less on that account. For my part, I should be like Adrian: I should hardly think of eating, if our house were set on fire, and no one could inform me what had happened to my father, mother, or even brother.

Lubbin. No, nor I—provided I were not hungry.

Sukey. Can one then be hungry in such a case? Look ye, Lubbin, I have not the least degree of appetite. To see poor Adrian weep,

weep, and take on ſo, has made me quite forget my hunger.

Lubbin. So you won't eat your milk-porridge this morning?

Sukey. What, do you want it, after having ſwallowed your own breakfaſt, with Yorkſhire cake into the bargain?

Lubbin. No; I would only take your breakfaſt, that, if neither you nor Adrian wiſhed to have it, nothing might be loſt; that is all. But let me have the tumbler: I have not drunk any thing yet.

Sukey, (*giving him the tumbler.*) Make haſte then! Adrian is very dry.

Lubbin, (*after drinking.*) Stay, ſtay, I will fill it for him.

Sukey. Without rincing it?

Lubbin. Do you ſuppoſe then that I have poiſon in my mouth?

Sukey. Very proper, truly, with the crumbs about the rim! I will rince it out myſelf. Young gentlemen are uſed to cleanlineſs, and I ſhould wiſh to let him ſee as much propriety and neatneſs in our cottage, as at home. (*She rinces the tumbler, fills it up, and then goes out.*)

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Lubbin, (alone.) So, there is my breakfaſt done. Suppoſe now that I ſhould run to town, and ſee the fire. I ſhall not be miſſed if I ſet out, ſtay there but half an hour or ſo, and then come back: it is nothing but a good ſound ſcolding from my mother. However, I will go a little way, and then determine. It is not more than twelve or thirteen minutes walk before I am there.—Come, come; faint heart, the proverb tells us, never won fair lady. *(He ſets off, but meets his father.)*

SCENE III.

Lubbin, Trueman, (with a cheſt upon his ſhoulders, tired and out of breath.)

Lubbin. What, you are come back, father? I was going on a little way to meet you.

Trueman, (with anxiety.) Were you? And is Adrian here?

Lubbin. Yes, yes; not long ago arrived.

Trueman, (putting down the cheſt.) Thank God! then the whole family are ſafe. *(He ſits down upon the cheſt.)* Let me take breath a little.

Lubbin.

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Lubbin. Won't you come in, father?

Trueman. No, no; I will remain here in the open air, till I am recovered from my hurry. Go, and tell your mother that I am returned.

Trueman, (alone, wiping his face.) I ſhall not die then, without having, in my turn, obliged my benefactor.

SCENE IV.

Trueman, Jane, Adrian, Lubbin, Sukey,

Jane, (running from the farm-houſe, and embracing Trueman.) Ah, my dear! what joy to ſee you come back ſafe!

Trueman, (embracing Jane in return.) My life! But Adrian, where is he, pray? Let me ſee him.

Adrian, (running up.) Here I am. Here, here, father! *(Looking round about him.)* But what, are you alone? Where is my papa, mama, and little ſiſter?

Trueman. Safe, my child; quite ſafe.—Embrace me!

Adrian, (jumping up into his arms.) O what joy!

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Jnne. We have been all in very great perplexity. Our neighbours are come back already.

Trueman. They had not their benefactor to preſerve, as I had.

Jane. But the fire, dear Thomas, is it out, and all the miſchief over?

Trueman. Over, Jane! the whole ſtreet is in flames. If you could only ſee the ruins, and the multitude of people! Women with their hair about their ears, all running to and fro, and calling out to find their huſbands and poor children; to which add the ſound of bells, the noiſe of carts and engines, with the cruſh of houſes when the timbers are burnt through, the frightened horſes, and the throng of people driving full againſt you. I cannot tell you how I made my way amidſt the flames that croſſed before me, and the burning beams that ſeemed ready every moment to fall down and cruſh me.

Jane. Bleſs us! you make my blood run cold.

Sukey. See, ſee, mother, how his hair and eye-brows are all ſinged!

Trueman. And ſee my arm too. But

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why ſhould I complain? Could I have only got away with life, I ſhould not have mattered loſing a limb for Mr. Creſwell.

Jane. How, my dear, a limb?

Trueman. What, wife, to ſave our benefactor? Was it not through his means that we both came together? Are we not indebted to his generoſity, not only for this farm, but for every thing? And what is ſtill more, my dear, was it not your milk that reared his weakly child, now ſo ſtrong and hearty? (*Adrian clings to Jane.*) Did I ſay that I ſhould not have mattered loſing a limb for Mr. Creſwell?——I ſay more; I would have given my life to ſave him.

Jane. Then you have been able to aſſiſt him?

Trueman. Yes, I have that happineſs to boaſt. He himſelf, his lady, and his daughter, had ſcarce got out of their houſe, as they ſuppoſed in ſafety, when a half-burnt beam fell down into the ſtreet before them. Happily, I was not ten yards off: the people fancied that they were cruſhed beneath its weight, and ran away. I heard their cries, came back, and ruſhing through the burning ruins, brought them off. I had

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had already ſaved this cheſt that you ſee here, and my cart, beſides, is loaded with the greateſt part of their moſt valuable furniture.

Adrian. Be ſure, my father will moſt richly recompenſe you.

Trueman. I am recompenſed already, my dear little friend! Your father did not perhaps expect ſuch a ſervice at my hands, and I have ſaved him. In that thought, I am much better paid than in receiving any recompenſe. But this is not the whole: I dare ſay he will be here preſently, and all his family and people.

Adrian. What then, ſhall I ſee them ſoon?

Trueman. Yes, my Adrian. But run, wife, and make a little preparation to receive them: let ſome ale be drawn, and have the cows milked inſtantly. Air ſheets to put on all our beds; and as for us, we will take up our lodging in the ſtable.

Jane. Be it ſo. I will play my part, I warrant you.

SCENE

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SCENE V.

Trueman, Adrian, Lubbin, Sukey.

Trueman. And I will go put the hay up in ſome kind of order in the barn, and make a little room for thoſe who may come hither requiring ſome ſhelter. All the fields, alas! are covered with them; I imagine, I ſtill ſee them! ſome ſtruck ſpeechleſs, gaze with abſolute inſenſibility, while they behold their houſes burning, or elſe fall down on the ground, fatigued and frightened! others run along like madmen, wring their hands, or pull their hair up by the roots, and uttering fearful cries, attempt to force their paſſage through a line of ſoldiers, who with bayonets keep them off, that they may ſave the property of the ſufferers from being plundered.

Sukey. O my poor dear Adrian! had you been there, they would have trod you under foot.

Trueman. As ſoon as they bring back my horſes, I will go out again, and take up all the children, women, and old men that I meet.

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meet. Had I been the pooreſt perſon in the village, this misfortune would have rendered me the richeſt; ſince the unhappy whom I ſhall ſuccour will belong to me. (*He ſtoops to take the cheſt up.*)

Lubbin. Dear father, let me help you.

Trueman. No, no: have a care! it is far too heavy for your ſtrength. Go rather, and bid Humphry heat the oven, and put all our kitchen things in order; and let Carter know that I want ſome flour ſent in: theſe miſerable people who are burnt out of their habitations ſhall at leaſt find wherewithal to ſatisfy their wants! Thank God! I am not ſo poor, that any one applying to my charity ſhould die for want of food. If I had nothing elſe, I would give them my laſt bit of bread. (*He and Lubbin go out.*)

SCENE VI.

Adrian, Sukey.

Sukey. Oh! *that* I would ſhare with you too, Adrian. Who, alas! would have ſuppoſed that I ſhould have ever ſeen you in your preſent ſituation?

Adrian.

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Adrian. Who indeed, my deareſt Sukey? for it is very hard in one night to loſe every thing.

Sukey. Be comforted, however, my dear friend! for do not you recollect how happy we were once together here, when we were leſs a great deal than at preſent. Well, we will be as happy with each other again. Do you fear that you can want any thing, as long as I have any thing to give you?

Adrian, (*taking Sukey by the hand.*) No, I do not indeed: but then, I thought, it would have been my part to make you happy, to get you a good huſband, as papa has often ſaid in joke, and to take care of your children, like my own.

Sukey. Well, now I muſt contrive to do all this myſelf; and when we love each other, it is exactly the ſame thing. I will get you all the fineſt flowers that I can make free to pull in our garden, and whatever fruit they will let me gather. You ſhall alſo have my bed, and I will ſleep all night long upon the ground beſide you.

Adrian, (*embracing her.*) O my dear, dear Sukey! how ought I to love you!

Sukey. You ſhall ſee likewiſe what care I will

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will take of Julia. I will be always with you both. We drank, you know, the same milk; and is not that all the same as if you were my brother, pray, and I your sister?

Adrian. Yes, and you shall always be my sister, and I do not know which of the two I shall love best for the future, you or Julia. I will present you also to papa, that you may be his daughter: but when, think you, will he come?

Sukey. Why should you make yourself uneasy? You have been told that he is safe.

Adrian. But my father is just like yours; and who can tell but he will go back again into the flames to save some friend or other. I must therefore be uneasy till I see him once again. But hark ye! do not I hear a tread on the other side of the hill? Oh! if it were he!

SCENE VII.

Adrian, Sukey, Gilbert.

Adrian. Ah, Gilbert!

Gilbert. Ah, my little master! you are safe then?

Adrian.

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Adrian. Truly, there is great need to talk about my ſafety! Where is papa, mama, and Julia? Are they with you?

Gilbert, (*not knowing what to ſay.*) With me?

Adrian. Yes; you have not left them behind, ſure?

Gilbert. Behind? (*Turning about.*) They are not behind me.

Adrian. They are not come with you, then?

Gilbert. Unleſs they be here, I do not know where they are.

Adrian, (*impatiently*) You do not come here to ſeek them? do you?

Gilbert, (*in confuſion.*) Do not be frightened, my dear little maſter!—Are they not come hither?

Sukey. None but Adrian.

Adrian. He is confounded, and has ſome bad news to tell me!—They are loſt, even after all the pains that honeſt Trueman took to ſave them!

Gilbert. Hear me.—There is no cauſe, at leaſt I hope not, to alarm yourſelf. About an hour or forty minutes after they had forced me from you to aſſiſt the ſufferers, I found

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found means to get into the crowd.—Dear Maſter Adrian, do not be frightened; but ſo it is indeed:—I ran about the ruins to diſcover where my maſter was, but could not come at any tidings of him; no, nor of my miſtreſs, nor Miſs Julia. I enquired of every one that I met, if they had heard of ſuch a family? but conſtantly was anſwered, No.

Adrian. O Heaven! take pity on me! Dear papa, mama, and Julia, where, where are you? Periſhed, doubtleſs!

Gilbert. I have not told you all yet; but pray do not be frightened.—The worſt part of the affair comes now.

Adrian. What is it then? Why do not you tell me, Gilbert?

Gilbert. How, in Heaven's name, would you have me tell you, if you let yourſelf be frightened in this manner?

Adrian. Speak! pray Gilbert, ſpeak!

Gilbert. Well then, the rumour was as follows: that a gentleman, a lady, and a little girl, were cruſhed to death, when they were juſt out of doors, and thought themſelves in ſafety. (*Adrian ſwoons away.*)

Sukey. Help! help! help! Come here to

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to our assistance, some one! Adrian is dying. (*She falls down by him.*)

Gilbert. Why, what ails him? I mentioned this but as a report; and besides, they could not tell me who it was. It may be nothing, after all.

Sukey. Why, how you talk! His fright at what you mentioned overcame him, and he quite forgot that my father had preserved them.

Gilbert, (*feeling Adrian's cheek.*) O my poor dear little Adrian! he is as cold as any ice!

Sukey, (*half getting up.*) And what could bring you here? It is you that have killed him?

Gilbert. I?—And yet, I am sure, you heard me bid him not be frightened. (*He raises him a little.*) Master Adrian! (*He lets him fall again.*

Sukey. How you go to work!—Do not touch him any more.—He will die, if he is not dead already, with such treatment! O my dear, dear brother Adrian!—Father! mother! Lubbin!—Why, where can they all be? (*She runs in for help.*)

Gilbert, (*leaning over Adrian.*) No, no, he

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he is not dead: he breathes a little. Were he dead, I would go and fling myſelf this moment into ſome pond.—(*He calls out*) Adrian! Maſter Adrian!—If I knew but how to bring him to himſelf!—(*He blows on Adrian's face.*) This blowing tries my lungs!—It was very fooliſh, I muſt own, in me, to tell him what I did; but much more ſo in him to pay attention to it: and particularly when I bid him not be frightened.—Could I poſſibly ſpeak plainer?—Adrian! Adrian!—He does not hear me.—When my dear wife died, I took on very ſadly for her; but to die on that account, would have been very ſilly!—Adrian! Adrian!—What had I beſt do? He does not ſeem as if he would recover. O, I ſee a pump—I will go and fill my hat with water—Half a dozen ſprinklings very poſſibly may have good effect upon him. (*As he is coming back to Adrian, Mr. Creſwell enters, leading in Mrs. Creſwell and Julia. Gilbert drops his hat, and runs away.*)

Gilbert. Heaven forgive me! Should he find him dead, I do not know what he will do! For my part, I am dead with fear already.

Mr.

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Mr. Creſwell. Was not that our Gilbert?—Gilbert, what is the matter? Where is Adrian?

Mrs. Creſwell. Sure he ran away, as if afraid of meeting with us. Where can he he have left him?

Julia, (ſeeing Adrian on the ground.) What is this here? A child! *(Stooping down.)* O Heaven! my brother! and he is dead!

Mrs. Creſwell, (falling down by Adrian.) How Julia! Adrian?—Yes, indeed! help! help!

Mr. Creſwell. Was this misfortune wanting after all? *(Examining the body.)* But he is not dead! Thank Heaven, we are better off than that.—He breathes a little.—My dear life, *(to Mrs. Creſwell,)* as Adrian needs aſſiſtance, keep your ſtrength that he may have it.

Mrs. Creſwell, (nearly ſwooning.) Adrian! Adrian!

Julia. Ah! my poor dear brother! Would to Heaven the flames had rather taken all from us! *(Mr. Creſwell raiſes Mrs. Creſwell, and brings Adrian to her.)*

Mr. Creſwell. There is no time to loſe.—Have you your ſalts about you?

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Mrs. Creſwell. I cannot tell, I am in ſo great an agitation. After ſo much fear and fright, here is one ſtill greater. I would part with all that is left us for a draught of water. (*Mr. Creſwell ſees the pump, and haſtens to it.*)

Julia, (feeling in her mother's pocket.) Here is your ſal volatile, mama. (*While the ſalts are uſing.*) Hear, hear, hear me, Adrian, and look up! or I ſhall die with grief. (*He comes a little to himſelf.*) O heavens, he breathes! (*She runs to her papa.*) Come, come, papa! come quickly! come and ſee him. (*Mr. Creſwell brings a little water in the hollow of his hand, and throws it on his face.*)

Adrian, (ſighing bitterly.) Oh! oh! papa; papa!

Mr. Creſwell. He ſuppoſes I am dead. That blockhead Gilbert muſt have frightened him.

Julia, (in tranſport.) See! ſee! his eyes begin to open!

Mr. Creſwell. My dear child, do not you know us?

Mrs. Creſwell. Adrian! Adrian!

Julia. Brother!

Adrian,

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Adrian, (*looking round him.*) Am I dead or living? or where am I? (*He ſits up in Mrs. Creſwell's lap.*) Ah! my dear mama!

Mrs. Creſwell. My child! and have we brought you back to life?

Adrian, (*turning to his father.*) Papa too!

Julia, (*embracing him.*) My dear Adrian! my ſweet brother! I am alive again, now you are.

Adrian. Oh! what joy to ſee you thus again, dear ſiſter! (*He turns to his mother.*) It was your ſweet voice, mama, that brought me back to life.

Mr. Creſwell, (*to Mrs. Creſwell.*) My dear, I was lamenting our misfortune juſt before; but now I find that there was a great deal more to be loſt, than goods and ſuch things.

Mrs. Creſwell. Let us not think a moment more about them.

Mr. Creſwell. Nay, rather we ſhould rejoice that they are in reality ſo trifling. I behold you all three ſafe, and can have nothing to diſturb me.

Julia. But brother, what brought you into ſuch a ſituation?

Adrian. Would you think it?—Gilbert!

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Mr. Creſwell. There, I ſaid ſo.

Adrian. Why, he told me that you had all three periſhed in the flames.

Julia, (*looking towards the hill.*) Ah! there he is, papa; above there. (*They all look up, and Gilbert draws his head in.*)

Mr. Creſwell. Gilbert! Gilbert!—He's afraid to anſwer *me*; ſo do you call him, Adrian.

Adrian. Gilbert!—Do not be fearful, but come down and ſhow yourſelf.—I am alive.

Gilbert, (*on the hill.*) Are you ſure of that?

Adrian. I think ſo. Did you ever hear a dead man ſpeak?

Gilbert, (*coming down, but ſtopping on a ſudden.*) You do not intend, I hope, ſir, to diſcharge me. If you do, I need not be at ſo much trouble to come on.

Mr. Creſwell. See, ſimpleton, the conſequence of ſpeaking without thought!

Mrs. Creſwell. A little more, and you had been the death of Adrian.

Adrian. Pray, mama, forgive him! It was not his fault.

Gilbert. No, certainly. I bid him not be frightened. (*Adrian holds out his hand.*) However,

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However, I am glad that you do not intend me any harm; and for the future, I will think no one dead, till such time as I see him ten feet under ground, and fairly buried.

SCENE VIII.

Adrian, Mr. and Mrs. Creswell, Julia, Trueman, Jane, Lubbin, Sukey.

Trueman, (*running in.*) O the wretch! where is he?

Sukey, (*shewing Gilbert.*) Look ye, father, here! (*Gilbert slinks behind his master.*)

Trueman. Who is this? (*Sukey and Lubbin run towards Adrian, who presents them both to Julia; the farmer bows to Mr. Creswell.*)

Mr. Creswell, taking him by the hand.) My friend! what means this humble distance? With such respect to bow before me! my preserver! and not only mine, but that of all my family!

Trueman. Yes, sir, it is another obligation that you have laid upon me. I have had the opportunity of shewing you my gratitude for all your favours.

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Mr. Creſwell. You have done much more for me than ever I did yet for you, and more than I ſhall ever have it in my power to do.

Trueman. What ſay you, ſir? The ſervice of a moment only. I, on the other hand, have lived theſe eight years paſt by means of your bounty. You obſerve theſe fields, this farm: from you I had them. You have loſt your all; permit me therefore to return them. It will be happineſs enough for me, that I ſhall always have it in my power to ſay, I have not been ungrateful to my benefactor.

Mr. Creſwell. Well then, my good friend, I *do* permit you to return them; but on this proviſo, to enrich you with much better. You have, luckily for me, preſerved my ſtrong box that had all my writings in it, and thoſe writings are the beſt part of my fortune; ſo that to you I owe the preſervation of my whole property. Having now no houſe in London, I will go down into the country, whither you ſhall follow me, and we will fix our habitation at a ſeat that I have in Norfolk. All your children ſhall be mine.

Adrian,

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Adrian. Ah! dear papa! I meant to beg as much. See here is my ſiſter Sukey, and here is Lubbin, my brother. If you knew the love and friendſhip that they have ſhewn to me! Poſſibly I might have now been dead, but for their kindneſs.

Mrs. Creſwell, (*graſping Jane's hand.*) Henceforth we will be but one family; and all our happineſs ſhall be in loving one another, like relations.

Jane. In the mean time, enter and repoſe yourſelves. Excuſe us, if our cottage cannot afford you the accommodations that we certainly could have wiſhed to do.

Trueman, (*looking towards the hill.*) I ſee my cart, ſir, and a number of poor people following. Will you give me leave to go and offer them the ſervice of which they are ſo much in need?

Mr. Creſwell. I will go with you, and conſole them likewiſe. I am too much intereſted in the melancholy accident that has diſtreſſed them, though far leſs a ſufferer by it.—Leſs! I ſhould have ſaid no ſufferer, but a gainer; for the day which I ſuppoſed, at firſt, to be ſo unfortunate, gives me back much more than I have loſt.

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It gives me, in return for ſuch things as with money I can purchaſe, what is far beyond the value of all money;—a new family and friends, who ſhall therefore be henceforth precious to my heart.

THE GOOD MOTHER.

A SONNET.

THE mother's tender heart, round whom
Her children throng in youthful bloom,
With love and tranſport overflows,
Such as a mother only knows,
What time her light deſcending hand
Gently taps one with action bland;
Another to her heart cloſe folds,
Inmate already there, ſhe holds.
A third climbs joyous on her knee;
While pleas'd the little thing to ſee,
Her hand aſſiſts, and with a ſmile
Kiſſing, ſhe pays the arduous toil.
Her foot, held out to ſerve as chair,
Dandles a fourth when ſeated there;

So

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So too the reſt, if more there be,
Round her, cloſe cling her progeny.
She reads all written in their eyes,
Their looks, careſſes, ſmiles and ſighs,
Theſe ſpeaking from the heart, declare
The thouſand little wiſhes there.
Their prattle all at once is heard,
And ſhe replies without a word;
For ſmiles alone are her reply:
While joyous they ſtand prating by.
Yet if it chance, a word amiſs,
A quarrel for the envied kiſs,
Or aught unfit to hear or view,
Among the little ones enſue,
A brow diſſatisfied ſhe takes,
Yet ſoon the low'ring ſtorm there breaks:
And while ev'n gloom o'erçaſts her mien,
That ſhe's a mother 'tis well ſeen.
In this, ſo obvious to man's ſenſe,
We ſee God's wond'rous providence,
That from the ſtores of heavenly grace,
Pours gifts on all the human race.
The rich, in fortune's lap high fed,
The poor beneath their lowly ſhed,
All on her ſmile ſubſiſt and ſhare
The bleſſings of her guardian care.

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She knows their need, ſhe hears their cry,
And views them with a mother's eye:
To none, among her children, blind,
But ſcattering gifts on all mankind.
Let none then, with preſumptuous ſenſe,
Dare tax the rule of Providence
With rigorous or even partial views;
If for a ſeaſon it refuſe
Some bleſſing, to their heart thought dear,
As if averſe their prayer to hear;
For their ſoul's good, God's gracious will
Seems to ſubject them thus to ill,
That through affliction's rigid ways,
They may attain fair Virtue's praiſe.
Or rather, for ſuch love we find
In his compaſſionating mind,
When he vouchſafes them, or denies,
No leſs beneficent he is than wiſe.

THE PROPER USE OF TIME.

MORGAN, though a plain companion, was a ſpecial workman. He aſpired at nothing in his heart ſo much

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as to become a maſter; but he wanted money to ſet up.

A merchant, who was well acquainted with his induſtry, was willing to ſupply him with an hundred pounds, that he might open ſhop.

One may, without much difficulty, gueſs at Morgan's joy. In his imagination, he already had a warehouſe full of goods. He reckoned up how many cuſtomers would crowd to buy them, and what money he ſhould have at balancing his books.

Amidſt the extravagant emotions of that tranſport into which theſe notions threw him, he perceived an alehouſe. Come, ſaid he, and entered it, I will have a little pleaſure with one ſixpence of this money.

He demurred, however, ſome few moments, to call out for punch which was his favourite liquor, as his conſcience loudly told him that the moment of enjoyment was not yet arrived; that he was, firſt of all, to think of paying what his friend had lent him; and at preſent that it was not honeſt for him to lay out a penny of the ſum for things not abſolutely neceſſary. He was ready to come out again, impreſſed

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by ſuch right notions, but bethought himſelf, on the other hand, that if he ſpent a ſixpence of his money, he ſhould ſtill have ninety-nine pounds nineteen ſhillings and a ſixpence left; that ſuch a ſum was full enough to ſet him up in trade, and that a ſingle half-hour's induſtry would compenſate for ſuch a trifling pleaſure as he wiſhed to have at preſent.

It was thus, that taking up the glaſs, he ſought to quiet his interior ſcruples; but alas, his preſent conduct was to open him a door to ruin.

On the morrow, ſo agreeable a recollection of his pleaſure at the ale-houſe filled his mind, that he was now leſs ſcrupulous with conſcience in expending one more ſixpence at it. He had ninety-nine pounds nineteen ſhillings ſtill remaining.

On the following days, the love of liquor had beſotted him in ſuch a manner, that he conſtantly returned to his beloved ale-houſe, but increaſed the quantum of his liquor, to a ſhilling's worth at firſt; then ſixpence more; and ſo on, till he came to half-a-crown; at which he ſeemed to make a ſtand, and every time, he could conſole himſelf

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himſelf with ſaying, It is but two-and-ſixpence that I am ſpending. Oh, I need not fear but I ſhall have enough to carry on my trade.

Such then was his deluſive way of reaſoning, in reply to what his conſcience whiſpered, which would now and then be heard. It did not ſtrike him, that his fortune was an even hundred pounds, and that the uſeful application of the whole depended on the fit employ to which he put its parts.

You ſee then, my dear little friends, how by inſenſible gradation he at length plunged into a life of extravagance. He found no longer any joy in induſtry, employed entirely as he was in contemplating on his preſent riches, which he fancied inexhauſtible; and yet, from day to day, he did not fail to find that they were diminiſhing. He was convinced, and his conviction all at once came over him juſt like a clap of thunder, that he could not make amends for his preceding diſſipation, as his benefactor would not be ſo fond of lending him another hundred pounds, when he had ſeen him ſo miſuſe the firſt.

Quite

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Quite overcome with ſhame and grief, the more he ſought to ſtifle his ideas with hard drinking, ſo much the ſooner by a great deal, did his ruin fall upon him. And at laſt the frightful moment came, when quite diſguſted at the thought of induſtry, and being, as it were, an object of horror to himſelf, he regarded life as a burthen, ſince it preſented him with nothing but a proſpect of miſerable poverty whenever he looked forward.

He renounced his country, followed by deſpair, and joined a gang of ſmugglers, formidable for the ravages which they ſpread through every country on the coaſt. But Heaven did not permit their violence to remain long unpuniſhed. A diſgraceful death ſoon ended his career of wickedneſs.

Alas! if when his reaſon firſt of all addreſſed him, he had liſtened to the reproaches of his conſcience, eaſy in his ſituation, he might now have been enjoying, in repute and honour, the eaſe of a reſpectable and opulent old age.

You ſhudder, children, at his lamentable folly. Such is notwithſtanding that of multitudes among us, in the uſe which they make

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make of life. It was beſtowed upon them that they might live happy in virtuous enjoyments, and yet they laviſh it upon every ſhameful diſſipation. They think that there will always be time enough left them, for the proper uſe thereof. However, in the interval, days, months, and years flow onward, and they find, at the concluſion of them, they have not made ſuch a uſe as they fondly propoſed. In ſome ſort, they are even happy if their conduct does not plunge them finally into deſpair.

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BLIND-MAN's BUFF.

A DRAMA, in Two ACTS.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. JEPHSON.
FRANK, *his Son.*
LUCY, ISABELLA, } *his Daughters.*
DORINDA, ALICE, LAURA, *a little lame,* } *their Friends.*
ELDER DANBY, YOUNGER DANBY, *who ſtutters,* } *Friends to Frank.*
ROBERTS, *their Acquaintance.*
Mr. Jephſon's Groom.

SCENE, *an apartment in the houſe of Mr. Jephſon, with a table, and upon it books and other papers, and a ſpeaking-trumpet in the corner.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Frank, (ſpeaking to his father as he goes down ſtairs.)

NO, no, papa, do not be afraid: I will take the greateſt care that no accident ſhall happen to your papers. I will put up your

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your books too in the cloſet.—(*He comes forward, jumping for joy.*) We ſhall have ſome fine diverſion! When the cat is away, the mice (it is ſaid) will play. (*To Lucy, who now comes in.*) Well now, Lucy, is mama gone out, and all our little friends arrived?

Lucy. My friends are all three come; but none of your companions yet.

Frank. O, I can eaſily believe you ſiſter. We do not want to run a gadding like you girls; and ſo we are not the firſt to keep appointments of this nature. You muſt force us from our ſtudy, if you would have us. Look you, I would lay any wager that the Danbys, at leaſt, are hard at work, while we are ſpeaking.

Lucy. Yes, to ſettle what fine tricks they can contrive to put upon us.—But pray, Frank, is it true that papa will let us paſs the evening here? our room above is ſo very ſmall, we could not have found room to turn ourſelves well round.

Frank. Could my papa refuſe you any thing, when I concerned myſelf to aſk it? Softly, little girl, do not diſcompoſe the papers.—Let them lie.

Lucy.

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Lucy. Keep that advice, ſir, to yourſelf; I meant to lay them ſmooth.

Frank, (*with an air of importance.*) No, no, you cannot, miſs; I am charged with that commiſſion.

Lucy. Truly, my papa could not have given it to ſo orderly a gentleman! let me at leaſt aſſiſt you then; and afterwards I will put the chairs in order. Theſe great books I ſhall remove firſt.

Frank. Do not think of touching them! At moſt I can permit you only to take one by one, and pile them up upon my hands. (*She does ſo, till they reach his chin.*)

Lucy. There is enough.

Frank, (*leaning backwards.*) One more only.—So.—I have now ſufficient for one turn. (*He takes a ſtep or two, when all the books fall down.*)

Lucy, (*burſting out a laughing.*) Ha, ha, ha, ha! there, there they go! Thoſe handſome books that papa would never let us touch! I fancy he will be greatly pleaſed to ſee them all tumbled together thus!

Frank. I had loſt the center of gravity, as my tutor ſays; and you know, he is gravity itſelf. (*He picks the books up, but they*

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they tumble down as faſt as he gathers them.) Deuce take it! They have been at Sadler's Wells, I think, and learned to tumble, ſure!

Lucy. You will never finiſh, if I do not aſſiſt you. So d'ye ſee, I will ſpread my apron, and do you ſtoop down and pile them in it.

Frank. That is well thought of indeed! (*Frank goes upon his knees, takes up the books, and places them in order in his ſiſter's apron.*)

Lucy. Softly, brother, they will rub one againſt another! So; I have got them all, and now I will carry them into the cloſet. (*She goes out.*)

Frank, (*riſing out of breath.*) Bleſs me! I ſhould never do to live a long time in the country where men go upon all-fours like monkies. (*He fans himſelf with his hat.*)

Lucy, (*re-entering.*) Could you ſee how neatly I have ranged them on the chimney, you would be charmed! So let me have the reſt. (*Frank puts the other books and all the papers in his ſiſter's lap, who ſays, when ſhe receives them,*) Well, every body muſt acknowledge that girls are cleverer than boys.

Frank.

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Frank. O yes, and you particularly. Iſabella is conſtantly employed in putting by your ſhreds and rags.

Lucy. And if your tutor had not conſtantly his eye upon you, you would never know where you ſhould find your exerciſes and tranſlations. *(She looks about her.)* But I fancy, I have now got them all.

Frank. Yes, yes; there is nothing left; ſo get you gone. (*Lucy goes out.*)

Frank, (*putting back the chairs and table in their places.*) There; ſo that is done, and we ſhall now have elbow-room enough. I cannot help thinking what fine work we ſhall be ſure to make. However, I am ſurpriſed that they are not come yet. For my part, I can ſay I hardly ever make any one wait for me when a viſit is in the caſe.

Lucy, (*entering once again, and looking round about.*) Ay, very well: but brother you muſt hide this ſpeaking trumpet. If your friends ſhould happen to perceive it, they will be ſure to ſtun us with their noiſe.

Frank. Stay, ſtay; I will put it up behind the door, as perhaps I ſhall want it. Let your little friends come now and din me

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me with their chattering, as they uſed to do, and we ſhall ſee who will cry out loudeſt.

Lucy. Pſhaw! we need but join together; we ſhould very ſhortly get the upper hand of ſuch a little thing as you.

Frank. O no; for if you ladies have your clappers ſo well hung, we gentlemen poſſeſs a fine clear manly voice, which every one reſpects: as thus—You hear me?

Lucy, (ſhrugging up her ſhoulders.) Yes; and have ſo much reſpect as you ſay, for you, that I will take myſelf away. Farewel. I will run and join my friends.

Frank. And bid the ſervant ſend me up my viſitors when they arrive.

Lucy. Yes, yes. *(She withdraws.)*

Frank, (taking up the ſpeaking-trumpet.) Here is what has often brought me from the furtheſt corner of the garden, much againſt my inclination; and, I think, I hear it ſtill.——So ho! there! Frank! Frank!—My young friends live only at the corner of the ſtreet. Let me ſee if I can hurry them. *(He puts the trumpet to his mouth, throws up the window, and cries out,)*

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Girls and boys come out to play,
The moon doth ſhine as bright as day:
Come with a whoop, and come with a call,
Come with good-will or not at all.

(*He leaves the window, and draws near the door.*) Well, is not this ſurpriſing! It is like Harlequin's enchanted horn. I think I hear them talking to each other on the ſtairs. (*He liſtens.*) Yes, yes! I proteſt the two Danbys. (*He puts the trumpet by.*) Suppoſe I were to jump now on the table, and receive them ſitting on my throne? (*He runs to fetch a ſtool that he may put it on the table; and prepares to take a ſpring, but the arrival of the two Danbys prevents him.*)

SCENE II.

Frank, Elder Danby, Younger Danby.

Frank. Could not you have ſtaid a little at the door till I was mounted on my throne, that I might give you audience, as they ſay, in all my glory?

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Elder Danby. Good indeed! you have no occaſion for a throne to look exactly like a king. And active as you are, the throne might poſſibly cauſe your majeſty a tumble.

Frank. Why, to ſay the truth, I have read of many tumbles of that nature in my ancient hiſtory.

Elder Danby. And in ſome ſort, ſuch an accident has happened to my brother, though he is no great prince. He fell down ſtairs laſt week, and hurt his noſe conſiderably.

Younger Danby, (ſtuttering.) Yes indeedeed! It pains me ſti-ſtill a little, and that Ma-a-aſter Roberts is a very nau-au-aughty boy.

Frank. Does he deſign to come to-night?

Elder Danby. I hope not: if we had expected him here, we ſhould not have ſtirred out.

Younger Danby. He o-o-only thinks of mis-miſchief.

Frank. What has he done then?

Elder Danby. We were both going out laſt Saturday. I ſtopped to get a handkerchief: my brother went down ſtairs alone, and, as it happened, Roberts hearing ſome one, came out ſlily, jumped at once upon my

my brother, who was frighted, loſt his footing, and rolled down the ſtairs from top to bottom.

Frank. Poor Danby! I am ſorry for you. Roberts looks for all the world as if he loved ſuch miſchief. We ſhall have his company this evening for the firſt time in our lives: his father begged papa to let him come and ſee us.

Elder Danby. I am ſorry for it. For we do not ſpeak to one another.

Frank. My papa ſuppoſed you all good friends, becauſe you lodge together, and conſidered that you would have the greater pleaſure if he came.

Elder Danby. The greater pleaſure! We ſhould like to have him ten miles off. Since he has been our neighbour, we are continually uneaſy. He has frequently amuſed himſelf with breaking windows, and then tried to lay the blame on us.

Frank. Does no one make complaint about him to his father?

Elder Danby. Oh! I do not know what to make of him; he is ſuch an odd ſort of a man! He ſcolds a little, pays the damage, and that is all.

Frank.

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Frank. If I were your papa, I would quit my lodgings and live ſomewhere elſe.

Elder Danby. Yes, ſo he means to do, and therefore yeſterday gave warning; and now we are forbidden all manner of connexion with this Roberts, he is ſo wicked! Would you think it, very few go by the houſe, without being apprehenſive that he will put ſome trick upon them. Sometimes he diverts himſelf by ſquirting puddle water at them, or elſe pelting them with rotten apples. Nay, he will ſometimes faſten rabbits tails or bits of rags behind their backs, at which the people, when they ſee it, all burſt out a laughing. Then too he has what he calls his *caxen fiſhery*.

Frank. Caxen fiſhery!

Elder Danby. Yes: he will take the people's wigs off, as they paſs him, with a hook, as you would catch carp. When any poor man ſtops before his window to converſe with an acquaintance, Roberts immediately goes up to the balcony, with a ſtring upon a fiſhing-rod, and at the end of it a hook, with which he jerks the poor man's wig off. Then he runs and ties it to a dog that he has before provided for

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the purpoſe, after which he drives the creature out into the ſtreet, and off he ſets that inſtant, ſo that the poor perriwig has frequently been dragged for twenty minutes through the mud, before its owner can lay hold of it again.

Frank. But this is more than mere amuſement!

Elder Danby. And yet this is nothing to the ſtories that I could tell you. Why, he lames or bruiſes all the dogs and cats that come within his reach. Nor is it long ago, when one of his relations broke a leg, by ſlipping down upon the ſtairs where Roberts had been ſcattering peas on purpoſe. Ay, it is ſo; or elſe our name is not Danby. And for the ſervants, I am ſure, his father would not get one to attend, if he did not pay extraordinary wages.

Frank. Shall I tell you now? I long to ſee him. I like boys a little merry.

Elder Danby. Nothing is more natural: but Roberts's mirth is not like that of other boys. You, I know, love laughing in your heart; but would not, for the world, hurt any one; whereas this wicked fellow laughs at bumps and bruiſes.

Frank

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Frank. Oh that does not fright me in the leaſt. I ſhall be much more pleaſed in paying him as he deſerves.

Elder Danby. If he ſhould come, you will not be angry if my brother goes? He would do him ſome freſh miſchief.

Younger Danby. Ye-ye-yes, I will go.

Frank. No, no: we are old friends; and poſitively no new comer ſhall divide us. I will take care and manage him, I warrant you.—But do not I hear a noiſe upon the ſtairs?—It is Roberts.—No, I ſee my ſiſter and her company.

SCENE III.

Frank, Elder Danby, Younger Danby, Lucy, Iſabella, Dorinda, Alice, Laura.

Lucy. Your humble ſervant, my good friends! but why not ſeated, brother? You might eaſily have got the gentlemen a chair apiece, ſince they have been with you. Sure there has been time enough.

Frank. As if we did not know that it is uſual to ſtand up when we receive ladies.

Lucy. I am charmed to find you know

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your duty; but where is Maſter Roberts? (*to the Danbys.*) I did ſuppoſe that you would have brought him with you.

Elder Danby. It is a long time now, thank Heaven, ſince we have been ſeparated from him.

Dorinda. Is he then unluckier than Lucy's brother?

Laura, (*archly.*) Certainly, he would be unlucky then indeed!

Alice. Lucy's brother! He is a very lamb to Roberts. We have known him for a long time. Have we not, dear ſiſter?

Laura. We have, and he has played me many a trick.

Alice. He was very intimate with Anthony my brother; but he is rid of him entirely now: why, he is the ſaddeſt fellow in the world!

Lucy. Oh, as for that, my brother is even with him there.

Dorinda. But to do miſchief merely for the pleaſure of it—there is the villainy!

Lucy. No, no, my brother is better than that comes to.

Frank, (*with an air of irony.*) Do you really think ſo? I am obliged to you!

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Dorinda. Well, well, my dear Lucy, we will be under your protection, you are the biggeſt of us; and beſides, at preſent you are miſtreſs of the houſe, and may command him.

Lucy. Do not you be afraid. I will keep him perfectly in bounds.

Frank. Yes, yes, Lucy: you ſhall take care of the ladies, and for you, (*to the Danbys,*) I will take you under my protection.

Elder Danby. Oh! he will hardly think of playing tricks with me. He knows me, I aſſure you. I only fear for my brother.

Younger Danby. He makes ga-ga-game of me! yes, al-al-always!

Laura. That is his way; he always attacks the leaſt. He would never vex my ſiſter,—none but me.

Lucy. I can believe you: ſuch as he are always cowards. I compare him to a puppy following cloſe upon a cat as long as ſhe keeps running: but if once the cat turns round, and ſhews her whiſkers, then the puppy ſcampers for it.

Frank. Well then, ſiſter, you ſhall be the cat.

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Laura. And let him ſee your whiſkers.

Lucy. But methinks it would not be amiſs if we ſat down. Though we expect this Mr. Miſchief-maker, we have no need, I fancy, to remain ſtanding up till he chuſes to appear.

Frank. Huſh! here he is.

SCENE IV.

Frank, Elder Danby, Younger Danby, Lucy, Iſabella, Dorinda, Alice, Laura, Roberts.

Roberts, (*to Frank and his ſiſter, making them a bow.*) Your ſervant. Your papa was pleaſed to let me wait upon you: ſo I am come to ſpend the evening with you.

Lucy. We are glad to ſee you, and ſhall have a deal of pleaſure in your company; at leaſt my brother.

Iſabella. Yes, indeed; he wants a good example.

Frank. Do I? So your good example, you would have the gentleman ſuppoſe, is not ſufficient.

Lucy. Well, a truce to compliments. As miſtreſs of the houſe, it is neceſſary that I ſhould

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ſhould let you know who is who. This tall young lady, in the firſt place, is Miſs Dorinda Lambton.

Roberts, (*with a banter.*) I am charmed to hear it.

Lucy. And theſe are the Miſs——

Roberts. O, I know them very well. This here is (*pointing to Alice,*) my lady—what is her name? Pentweazle, that will take you off the company, as ſimple as ſhe ſeems: And there is (*pointing to Laura, and limping round the room*) Miſs Up-and-down, who broke her leg by running from the rod. This gentleman, (*Elder Danby*) obſerve him, he is a grave wiſe Grecian, who looks ſtrait before him when he walks, as if he pitied us poor filly children. And this other good little friend of mine (*pointing to young Danby, and letting fall his hat,*) is Pe-pe-peter Grievous, whoſe dear mama forgot, poor creature! to untie his tongue when he was born. (*The children ſeem ſurpriſed, and ſtare at one another.*)

Frank. And who am I, ſir, for methinks you ſeem quite clever at this ſort of portrait painting?

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Roberts. Oh, I am not ſufficiently acquainted with you yet, to take your likeneſs: but I ſhall let you have it ſoon.

Lucy. For you, ſir, I could draw you at a glance, and I muſt tell you, the ſimilitude would not be very pleaſing. I could never have ſuppoſed it poſſible that any well bred little gentleman, as I imagine you affect to be, ſhould think of turning natural defects into a theme for banter. If my little friends were not ſincerely ſuch, they would have reaſon to reproach me for expoſing them to your indecency. But they can ſee that I could not have expected half ſo much myſelf.

Roberts. Why, Frank, I proteſt, your ſiſter is mighty eloquent. You need not go to church on Sundays, having ſuch a charming preacher in the houſe.

Frank. She has tolerable ſkill, when any one is to be told the truth; and therefore both my ſiſter Iſabella and I love her ſincerely.

Roberts. Well, well, you ſee I have tolerable ſkill likewiſe in telling truth; and therefore no doubt you will love me, too, ſincerely.

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ſincerely. (*He bows to Lucy.*) I aſk your pardon, miſs, for having taken your employment out of your hands, as you are yourſelf ſo clever at it.

Lucy. Your excuſes and your bow are both an inſult; but an inſult, ſuch as I deſpiſe. Though, were they on the other hand ſincere, they would hardly make atonement for ſo coarſe an incivility. If I had not conſidered every word that you ſaid as meant in joke, however groſs I cannot but ſuppoſe it, I ſhould know what ſuited me to do, and ſhould have done it likewiſe. Let me therefore beg, ſir, that you will indulge in no more freedoms of this nature, if you mean that we ſhould remain together.

Roberts, (ſomewhat embarraſſed.) Well, but I ſee you do not underſtand a little harmleſs piece of banter. Let us be friends. (*He holds out his hand.*)

Lucy, (giving hers.) With all my heart, ſir; but provided—

Roberts, (turning his back ſuddenly upon Lucy, and addreſſing young Danby.) You are an honeſt little fellow, too, and I will ſhake hands with you. (*He heſitates to*

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give his hand, and therefore Roberts ſeizing on it, ſhakes his arm ſo roughly, that he falls a crying.)

Elder Danby. Maſter Roberts!

Frank, (laying hold of Roberts's arms.) Pray, ſir, let this child alone; or—

Roberts. Well—or what?——my little Jack-a-dandy.

Frank, (boldly.) I am little, I acknowledge, but yet ſtrong enough; and ſo you will find me, when my friends require to be defended.

Roberts. Say you ſo? in that caſe I ſhould like to be one of them. But beforehand, if you pleaſe, we will have a bruſh, juſt to ſee how you will be able to defend them.

(Roberts on a ſudden tries to fling him down; but Frank ſtands his ground, and Roberts falls. The company ruſh in to part them.)

Frank. But one moment, if you pleaſe, young ladies. I will not do him any harm. Well, Mr. Roberts, pray how do you find yourſelf? I fancy I am your maſter.

Roberts, (ſtruggling.) Take your knee off,—or you will ſtifle me.

Frank. No, no; you muſt not think of getting up, unleſs you firſt aſk pardon.

Roberts,

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Roberts, (furiously.) Pardon!

Frank. Yes, ſir, and of all the company, as you have certainly offended all the company.

Roberts. Well, well; I do aſk pardon.

Frank. If you ſhould inſult us again, be aſſured, we will ſend you down into the cellar till to-morrow morning, which will ſurely cool your courage. That is much better than to hurt you. We do not think you worth the trouble.—Riſe. (*He gets from off him, and when both are up, continues.*) You have no right to be offended; for remember, it was yourſelf began the conteſt. (*Roberts ſeems aſhamed.*)

Dorinda, (aſide to Iſabella.) I could never have ſuppoſed your brother half ſo valiant!

Iſabella. Oh! a lion is hardly bolder; and yet, Dorinda, he never quarrels. He is, in ſhort, although I ſay it, the beſt tempered little fellow in the world. (*To the company.*) But what are we doing? We ought to think of ſome amuſement for the evening.

Frank. Certainly we ought, or why are we all come together? Well, what play

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ſhall we chuſe? Something funny? What ſay you, Danby?

Elder Danby. We will let the ladies chuſe. (*Roberts makes mouths at Frank and Danby: the reſt pretend as if they did not ſee him.*)

Lucy. There, Frank; there is a leſſon for you: we may chuſe. Well then, ſuppoſe we play at queſtions and commands? or poſſibly you would like a game at cards much better?

Laura. I ſhould rather play at ſomething with the leaſt Danby. If you have a picture-book, we will turn it over: ſhall we?

Younger Danby. O o-o-oh, yes, yes.

Lucy. With all my heart, ſweet dears! I will carry you up ſtairs. You will neither want for pictures nor playthings there. (*Laura and the Younger Danby take hold of one another by the hand, and jump for joy.*)

Lucy, (*to the ladies.*) My friends, will you go with me for amuſement into my apartment? I have a charming bonnet that you will like to ſee.

All (*together.*) Yes, yes, yes; let us go.

Elder Danby. Will you accept my hand as far as your apartment, Miſs Lucy?

Lucy.

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Lucy. Rather let Miſs Dorinda or Alice have it, if they pleaſe.

(*The elder Danby preſents his hand to Alice, who happens to ſtand near him.*)

Roberts. What then, do you mean to leave me by myſelf here?

Frank. No, ſir; theſe young ladies will excuſe me, ſo I ſhall ſtay: but I am obliged to leave you for a moment.

Roberts. Are you? but I will follow you. I do not like to be left alone by night, and in a houſe where I am a ſtranger.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Frank, Roberts.

Roberts. The truth is, I was apprehenſive leſt you might think of playing me ſome trick; ſo I accompanied you. But now that we are returned, and all alone, we may deviſe ſome mirth between us.

Frank. Very willingly; I aſk no better: ſo let us think a little.

Roberts. We muſt have ſome fun, I fancy, with the younger Danby.

Frank.

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Frank. If by fun you mean ſome trick to hurt him, I ſay no: I ſhall be in a joking humour; ſo pray leave him out, if you are bent on miſchief.

Roberts. They told me that you were always merry, and fond of ſomething funny.

Frank. And ſo I am: but, notwithſtanding, without hurt to any one. However, let me know what ſort of fun you meant.

Roberts. Look you: here are two large needles. I will ſtick them both with the points upward in the bottom of two chairs, that common eyes ſhall not diſcern them. In the next place you ſhall offer two of theſe young ladies the two chairs, for very likely they would ſuſpect that I meant them miſchief of ſome ſort or other, and they will naturally both ſit down: but figure to yourſelf what ſtrange grimaces they will both make! Ha! ha! ha! ha! It makes me die a laughing, when I barely think what faces we ſhall ſee them put on! Ay, ay! and your prudiſh ſiſter, too, will find the matter quite diverting.

Frank. But ſuppoſe I were to treat you juſt in the ſame manner, would you like it?

Roberts.

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Roberts. Oh! treat me! that is different; but thoſe little idiots——

Frank. So you call them idiots, do you, ſince they are not miſchievous?

Roberts. Well, you are mighty formal and preciſe. Then ſhall I mention ſomething elſe?

Frank. Yes, do.

Roberts. Then I have ſome thread as ſtrong as whipcord in my pocket. I will thread one of theſe great needles with a little of it; and as ſoon as they are all come down, one of us ſhall go up politely towards them, make a deal of ſcraping, and wry faces, while the other, keeping ſtill behind, ſhall ſew their gowns together. They will all want to dance, as you may gueſs; ſo up we will come, and take them out.—Ha! ha! you know the reſt; ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Frank. Yes, to tear their gowns, and get them anger when their parents find it out?

Roberts. Why there is the fun.

Frank. What! have you no pleaſure then in any thing but doing miſchief?

Roberts. But it does not hurt me—

Frank. O ho! I underſtand: you think of no

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no one but yourſelf, and all the world is nothing to you!

Roberts. Well; but we are come together to divert ourſelves, and we muſt poſitively have ſome laughing. So ſuppoſe we frighten Laura and the leaſt Danby?

Frank. But that is quite wrong. Suppoſing any one ſhould frighten you?

Roberts. With all my heart, if any one is but able. I am afraid of nothing.

Frank, (*aſide.*) Say you ſo?—That we ſhall ſee, perhaps.——(*Aloud to Roberts.*) Well, about this frightening?

Roberts. I have an ugly maſk at home. I will run and fetch it. And do you, when I am gone, contrive to bring the little children down, and you ſhall ſee—I will not be abſent half a minute.

Frank, (*aſide.*) Good!—There ſhall be a better maſk ready for you, though!—(*To Roberts, calling him back.*) But Roberts! Roberts!

Roberts. What is the matter?

Frank. It will be better that we ſhould come upon them where we are, if I can bring the others down; for when there are but two or three in this part of the houſe, there

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there ſometimes comes a ſpirit; and in that caſe, we ourſelves ſhould be but badly off.

Roberts. What is all this ſtory of a ſpirit?

Frank. Nay, it is true. At firſt one hears a noiſe, and then a phantom with a lighted torch glides by, and then the room ſeems all on fire. (*He draws back, as if afraid.*) Oh! methinks I ſee it now.

Roberts, (*a little frightened.*) See what?—O dear!—And what can bring the phantom here?

Frank. (*drawing Roberts towards a corner, and then whiſpering to him.*) The reaſon, as we are told, is this: There was a miſer who lived here formerly, and he was robbed one night of all his money. In deſpair he cut his throat, and now from time to time his ghoſt goes up and down—

Roberts, (*in a tremble.*) O ho! I will ſtay no longer here, unleſs you get more company.

Frank. But recollect how brave you were juſt now.

Roberts. You muſt not fancy I am afraid: —but—but—but—but—but I will go and fetch my maſk.

Frank.

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Frank. Do, do: and I will prepare things here.—What pleasure we shall have!

Roberts, (*with a grin.*) Oh! enough to make one die with laughing!

Frank. They will be finely frightened!

Roberts. That they will! and therefore I will make haste. I am at home and back again—you shall see how soon! (*He goes out.*)

Frank, (*alone.*) Ah! ah! you want to frighten others, and are not afraid yourself! Well! well! I have a thought of something that will frighten you, or I am very much mistaken.

SCENE II.

Frank, Lucy, Isabella, Dorinda, Alice, Elder Danby.

Lucy. We saw Master Roberts run across the street this moment! What is the matter? Have you had a quarrel?

Frank. On the contrary, he thinks me his best friend. I have seemed willing to go shares with him in a trick that he means to put upon the little ones above; but it is himself that he will trick, and never wish to come here a third time.

Lucy.

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Lucy. Well, what is your project?

Frank. You ſhall know very ſoon. At preſent I have no time to loſe, for every thing muſt be in readineſs againſt his coming back: ſo, ladies, I requeſt permiſſion to be abſent for about five minutes.

Dorinda. Yes, go, go: but do not ſtay longer. We are all impatient to be told what you deſign.

Frank. I ſhall certainly let you know when I have finiſhed my preparations. So once more with your leave. I will come again in leſs, perhaps, than five minutes. (*He goes out.*)

Lucy. Ah! ah! ah!—Two pretty fellows together! We ſhall ſee what good comes out between them! They are well matched.

Elder Danby. Oh! for Heaven's ſake, Miſs Lucy, do not do ſuch diſhonour to my friend, your brother, as to name him and that wicked Roberts together.

Alice. You are in the right, Danby. One is nothing but politeneſs, and the other quite a ſavage.

Iſabella. Savage as he is, however, I would

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would lay a wager that Frank will be found his master.

Dorinda. What a piece of service Frank would do us, could he clear the house of such a fellow! We shall have no pleasure all the evening, if he stays among us.

Lucy. I am afraid, however, Frank will proceed too far, and think himself permitted to do any thing against this Roberts.

Elder Danby. He can never do enough; and though his scheme should be a little hard on Roberts, there will be instruction in it: it is the greatest service that one can do him: and his father, I am persuaded, will be pleased with Frank, when he hears what pains he has taken to instruct his son. Alas! he would part with half his fortune, to have Roberts like him.

Alice. So Lucy, do not you go about to thwart your brother's good intentions.

Lucy. But, my dear Miss Alice, I am in a ticklish situation: I am now in the place of my mama, and cannot possibly let any thing go forward that she would not approve.

Alice.

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Alice. Let him have his way. We will take the blame of what he does upon ourselves.

Isabella. Yes, let him, sister. War, I say, war; war for ever with the wicked!

Frank, (*returning joyfully.*)—I have settled every thing, and Roberts may appear whenever he thinks proper. We will receive him.

Lucy. But, I hope, you will tell me—

Dorinda. Yes, we will be in the plot too: and more than that, assist you if we can.

Frank. No, ladies, that is not necessary. There is a little violence, I must acknowledge, in my plot, and therefore I will not make you parties. I have been settling every thing with Ralph in the stable. He conceives my meaning clearly, and will second it with great dexterity.

Lucy. But still, you do not acquaint me—

Frank. This is all of the contrivance that you need know. We will go to Blind-man's Buff, that Roberts may suspect no harm on his return. I will let myself be caught, and he or she that blinds me must take

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take care that I may have an opportunity of ſeeing through the handkerchief, and fixing upon Roberts. After he is blinded, you ſhall ſteal into the cloſet, take away the lights, and leave us both together. When I want your aid, I will call you.

Elder Danby. But if Roberts ſhould proceed to thraſh you in your tête-à-tête?

Frank. Proceed to thraſh me! You obſerved how eaſily I flung him down. I am not afraid of ſuch a one as he, for I have found him to be nothing but a coward: ſo that is fixed. But firſt, we muſt have both the little ones down ſtairs, or Roberts might go up and frighten them while we are talking here together. So pray, ſiſter, (*to Iſabella,*) go and bring them down.

Iſabella. Yes, yes. (*She goes out.*)

Lucy. But, brother, I am not clear that I ſhould permit you——

Alice. What is the matter? Let him do, I tell you, as he pleaſes.

Frank. Yes, yes, ſiſter; and rely on my diſcretion. You are ſenſible, I do not like miſchief, for the ſake of miſchief: therefore he ſhall not have half the puniſhment that he merits, but come off when I have

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frightened him a little; and that is all the harm that I mean to do him.

Lucy. Well then, Frank, on your promiſe of diſcretion—

Frank. Yes, I promiſe you no leſs. So let us make haſte, and put the things to rights, that all may be in order here too when he comes—(*They put away the chairs and table. Iſabella in the mean time comes down with Laura and younger Danby.*)

Frank, (*going up to Laura and younger Danby,*)—Come, come, my little friends, into this cloſet; but take care and do not make any noiſe, or Roberts very poſſibly will hear you.

Iſabella. I will conduct them. There is a book of pictures in it; and I will ſtay to ſhew them whatever they like.

Laura. I thought the tea was ready: May we not ſtay here with you till it comes in?

Frank. I ſhall fetch you when the ſervant brings it: but at preſent you muſt go into the cloſet: Roberts wants to frighten you, and I will not let him.

Younger Danby. Ye-ye-yes, let us go, my de-

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de-de-dear. (*Isabella takes up a candle, and goes in with Laura and younger Danby.*)

Frank. We comprehend, I ſuppoſe, what we are to do? My eyes not wholly covered, and, whenever I may give the ſignal, you muſt take away the light, and get into the cloſet; but particularly, a perfect ſilence.

Dorinda. Yes, we underſtand you.

Frank. I believe, I hear a noiſe! huſh! huſh! huſh! (*he liſtens at the door.*)

Yes, yes; it is he! it is he! be quick, let one of you be blinded.

Dorinda. I will begin. Who takes my handkerchief? (*Alice blinds Dorinda, and they begin to run about.*)

SCENE III.

Frank, Lucy, Dorinda, Alice, Roberts.

(*Roberts, as he enters, pinches Dorinda, on which ſhe throws her hands out, and lays hold of him.*)

Dorinda. It is Maſter Roberts. I well know him by his pinching me.

Frank. It is Maſter Roberts; but he was not in the play. You muſt begin again.

Roberts.

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Roberts. Undoubtedly, Frank is right.

Dorinda. Well, be it ſo: but if I catch you again, it ſhall be all fair. Remember, I have warned you.

Roberts. O yes, yes. (*He takes Frank aſide, and lets him ſee a little of the maſk.*) What think you of it?

Frank, (feigning to be frightened.)—O how frightful! I ſhould certainly be terrified at ſeeing it myſelf. Well, hide it carefully: we will play a little, and then ſlip away.

Roberts, (whiſpering Frank.)—Yes, yes, we will: but I muſt, firſt of all, do ſomething to teize the ladies.

Frank, (whiſpering Roberts.)—I will go up to Dorinda, and turn her round: if ſhe ſhould catch me, ſhe will ſuppoſe it to be you, and muſt ſet out again.

Roberts, (whiſpering Frank.)——Good! good! I will have a little fun with her too.

Alice. Well; when will you have told each other all your ſecrets? Two fine gentlemen! why, do not you ſee, the game ſtands ſtill?

Roberts. You need not ſtay for us; we are ready.

Frank, (keeping near Miſs Dorinda, as if

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he wiſhed to pull her by the gown, and ſeeing Roberts go to fetch a chair,)—(Aſide.) Now, Miſs Dorinda, I will put myſelf into your way.

(Roberts brings a chair, and puts it ſo that Dorinda may tumble over it; but Frank takes the chair away, and puts himſelf inſtead, upon his hands and feet, with ſo much noiſe, that Dorinda may hear him. As ſhe ſlides along her feet, as if at hazard, ſhe encounters Frank, ſtoops and ſeizes him.)

Dorinda, (after having felt about his cape and wriſts, and ſeeming doubtful.) It is Maſter Frank.

Frank, (in appearance diſconcerted.)—Yes, indeed; I am miſtaken. What ill luck! ſo ſoon?

Dorinda, (pulling off the bandage.)—O, ho! you wanted to throw me down! I thought nobody but Maſter Roberts played ſuch tricks; but it ſhall not be long before I take revenge.

(She covers Frank's eyes, but ſo that he can ſee a little; leads him towards the middle of the room, and then, as is the cuſtom of the game, aſks him,) How many horſes in your father's ſtable?

Frank,

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Frank. Three; black, white, and grey.

Dorinda. Turn about three times, and catch whom you may.

(*Frank gropes his way from place to place, and lets himſelf be joſtled as they pleaſe. Miſs Dorinda particularly plagues him; he pretends to follow her, but all at once turns round, and falls on Roberts.*)

Frank. Ah! ha! I have caught you! have I? It is a boy. It is Roberts! (*pulling off the handkerchief.*) Yes, yes, I am miſtaken.

Roberts, (*whiſpering Frank.*) Why lay hold on *me?*

Frank, (*whiſpering Roberts.*) Do not mind it. You ſhall catch Danby. I will puſh him towards you.

Roberts, (*whiſpering Frank.*) Do! and you ſhall ſee how I will make him ſqueak: I will pinch him till the very blood comes.

(*Frank begins to cover Roberts's eyes, and gives his company a nod, as he had ſettled it. Elder Danby, aſſiſted by the little ladies, takes away the light, and all together run into an adjoining cloſet, without making any noiſe.*)

Elder Danby, (*juſt before he ſteps into the cloſet.*) Well: have you finiſhed? Oh, make

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haſte. You take a deal of time. What miſchief are you whiſpering to each other?

(*At this inſtant the groom preſents himſelf at the door; he has a lighted torch in one hand, and a ſtick beneath it in the other, with a large full-bottomed wig upon it. He is covered head and all, with Mr. Jephſon's gown, which trails along upon the ground behind him. Frank beckons him to ſtay a little at the entrance, while he is blinding Roberts.*

Frank, (*putting Roberts in the middle of the room.*) How many horſes in your father's ſtable?

Roberts. Three; black, white, and grey.

Frank. Turn about—(*pretending to be angry with the others.*) Be quiet pray, young ladies, and not quit your places till the game is begun.—Turn about three times, and catch whom you may.

(*While Roberts turns about, Frank runs for the ſpeaking-trumpet, bids the groom untie a chain that he has about his waiſt, which falling makes a hideous noiſe, and then he cries out luſtily himſelf.*) The ghoſt! the ghoſt! Run, Roberts, for your life.

(*He claps the door to violently, hides himſelf behind the groom, and ſpeaking through the trumpet,*

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trumpet, ſays) It is you then that come to ſteal my treaſure?

Roberts, (*trembling with fear, and not daring to pull off the bandage.*) Fire! fire! Danby! where are you, Frank! murder! murder! Dorinda!

Frank. (*ſpeaking through the trumpet.*) I have ſcared them all away.—Pull off your bandage, and look at me.

(*Roberts, without pulling off the bandage, puts both hands before his face, retiring as the ghoſt advances on him.*)

Frank. Pull it off, I ſay——

(*Roberts makes ſhift to pull the bandage down, which falls about his neck. He dares not lift his eyes up; but at laſt when he obſerves the ghoſt, he ſcreams out, and has not power to move.*)

Frank. I know you well, your name is Roberts.

(*Roberts hearing this, runs up and down to get away: he finds the door ſhut faſt, falls down upon his knees, holds out his hands, and turns away his head.*)

Frank. What, do you think to eſcape me, do you?

Roberts, (*after ſeveral efforts.*) I have

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done nothing to you. You were never robbed by me.

Frank. Never robbed by you? You are capable of any villainy! Who ſquirts at people in the ſtreet? Who faſtens rabbits' tails behind their backs? Who fiſhes for their wigs? Who lames poor dogs and cats? Who ſticks up pins in chairs to prick his friends when they ſit down? And who has in his pocket, even now, a maſk to frighten two poor little children?

Roberts. I have done all this! indeed I own it! but for heaven's ſake pardon me, and I will not do ſo any more.

Frank. Who will anſwer for you?

Roberts. Thoſe that you have frightened away, if you will but call them.

Frank. Do you promiſe me yourſelf?

Roberts. Yes, yes; upon my honour.

Frank. Well then, I take pity on you: but remember, had it been my pleaſure, I might eaſily fly away with you through the window.

(*Here the phantom ſhakes his torch, which gives a glare like lightning, and then goes out. Roberts almoſt ſwooning with terror, falls down on his face.*)

SCENE

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SCENE *the Laſt.*

Roberts, Frank, the Groom, Mr. Jephſon.

Mr. Jephſon, (*entering with a candle in his hand.*) What is all this diſturbance?

Roberts, (*without looking up.*) It is not I that make it. Pray, pray, do not come near me!

Mr. Jephſon, (*perceiving Roberts on the ground,*) Who can this be on the ground?

Roberts. You know me well enough, and have already taken pity on me.

Mr. Jephſon. I have already taken pity on you!

Roberts. It was not I that robbed you.

Mr. Jephſon. Robbed me! what does all this mean? Do not I know you, Maſter Roberts?—

Roberts. Yes, yes; that is my name, good ghoſt: ſo pray do not hurt me,

Mr. Jephſon. I am aſtoniſhed! why in ſuch a poſture? (*He puts down the light, holds out his hand and lifts him up.*)

Roberts, (*ſtruggling firſt of all, but knowing Mr. Jephſon afterwards.*) Mr. Jephſon, is it you? (*his features brighten.*) He is gone

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gone then! is he? *(he looks round about him, ſees the ghoſt and turns away again.)* There, there he ſtands!—the phantom!—don't you ſee him?

(Frank brings the children from the cloſet. Laura and younger Danby are frightened at the groom's appearance; but the reſt burſt out a laughing.)

Mr. Jephſon. Well! what ſignifies all this?

Frank, (coming forward.) Let me explain the whole, papa. This phantom is your groom; and we have put on him your wig and gown.

The Groom, (letting fall his diſguiſe.) Yes, ſir, it is I.

Mr. Jephſon. An odd ſort of ſport this, Frank!

Frank. True; but aſk the company if Maſter Roberts has not well deſerved to be thus frightened. He deſigned to frighten Laura and Danby: I only wiſhed to hinder him. Let him but ſhew the frightful maſk that he has about him.

Mr. Jephſon, (to Roberts.) Is this true?

Roberts, (giving him the maſk.) I cannot deny it: here it is, ſir.

Mr.

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Mr. Jephſon. You have met with nothing, then, but what you deſerve.

Dorinda. We perſuaded Miſs Lucy to permit her brother to make uſe of this device in order to puniſh Roberts.

Alice. If you knew beſides, ſir, all the other tricks that he meant to play us—

Mr. Jephſon. What, ſir, is this the ſample that you give us of your behaviour, the firſt time you ſet foot within my doors? You have been diſreſpectful to me in the perſon of my children, who were pleaſed with the expectation of having you as their gueſt. You have been diſreſpectful to theſe ladies, whom I need not ſay you ſhould have honoured and regarded. So be gone! Your father, when he comes to know that you have been thus turned out of doors, will ſee how neceſſary it is to correct the vices of your heart. I will not permit your deteſtable example to corrupt my children. Go, and never let me ſee you here again! *(Roberts is confounded, and withdraws.)* And you, my friends, although the circumſtances of the caſe may very poſſibly excuſe what you have done, yet never, for the time to come, indulge yourſelves in ſuch

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ſuch a ſport. The fears which have power to affect children at a tender age, may poſſibly be followed by the worſt conſequences during their whole life. Avenge yourſelves upon the wicked only by behaving better; and remember after the example which Maſter Roberts has afforded you, that by intending harm to others, you will oftenest bring it down upon yourſelves.

END OF VOL. IV.

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